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# CONCEALMENT.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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## CONCEALMENT.

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### CHAPTER I.

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“ Oh ! she that hath a heart of that fine frame,  
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,  
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft  
Hath kill'd the flock of all affections else  
That live in her ; . . . . .

SHAKESPEARE.

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EDWARD BYNGHAM slept, the night before his departure, at Mr. Dermont's ; that he and Frederick might set out early the following morning. Caroline and Julia therefore returned together to Arlingham, mingling their tears and regrets ; while their mutual grief drew their hearts closer to each other. Miss Montrevor felt, more than ever she had before done, the late parting from Edward, for whom she entertained a serious attachment, which had been by no means lessened by her late suspicions. Edward

had shewn much kindness in taking leave of her ; and, at this moment, all jealous fears were forgotten, and she sympathized most affectionately in the sorrow of her friend.

Lady Montrevor received with equal tenderness the weeping girls, and, by every kind endearment, sought to raise their drooping spirits. In this endeavour she for once succeeded better with her daughter than with Julia ; who, in addition to the recent separation from her brother, had a heavy weight of new-found cares and anxious thoughts upon her mind. She had not yet learnt to hoard her sorrows any more than her joys ; and her full heart sought relief, where it had from infancy been accustomed to find it, on the truly maternal bosom of Lady Montrevor. For this purpose, she requested admission to that lady's apartment before she went to bed ; and introduced the subject by displaying, with tearful eyes, the well-remembered broken

trinket. She then proceeded to give a full account of the information she had acquired ; together with the artless history of the grief and romantic emotions of her own heart on this occasion. Lady Montrevor pressed her to her bosom, and kissed away the tears from her cheek ; assuring her that, while she lived, a mother's watchful care and love should ever be hers. She even condescended to sooth the agitation of the lovely girl, by seeming to partake the visionary hope that time and circumstances might yet restore the lost miniature, and possibly discover some further particulars respecting her parents.

Having thus, with the true characteristic indulgence of a real wish to impart consolation, calmed the swelling tumult in the bosom of Julia, she proceeded to represent the prudence and necessity of keeping the particulars that had been related to her, in strict secrecy, from every one,—even Caroline : as, besides

the pain she would suffer, were they publicly known, they might in many ways be highly injurious to herself. Julia repeatedly kissed her kind protectress ; thanking her for all she had done for her, and expressing much anxiety for the time when she could acknowledge her vast debt of gratitude to her good friend Mr. Byngham. She then repaired to her chamber, where sleep soon kindly came to crown Lady Montrevor's work, and restore that tranquillity which had, through this day, been so much destroyed.

Great was the difference in the state of mind of the two friends now journeying towards Oxford. That of young Byngham was as free from care as those of the generality of his age. He had felt moderately concerned at leaving his cousin, and the lively Julia ; and he regretted the loss of Lord Carlmaine's society. But, on all other accounts, he liked well enough the change to Oxford. At the house of a friend, on the road, he received

a favourable account of his mother ; and proceeded gaily on his journey.

Mr. Byngham wrote also, at the same time, to his ward a long and affectionate letter, concerning his conduct and arrangements at college ; telling him that, under all circumstances, and in every emergency, he would find an indulgent and affectionate father in his mother's friend. Frederick, in his answer, expressed the love and gratitude he felt towards the benefactor and guardian of his infancy, and that of Julia ; adding the hope, that it might be in his power, at least by his diligence and good conduct, to prove himself deserving such kindness. He then made Mr. Byngham acquainted with what had passed between him and Julia ; adding the wish of one day visiting Keswick, with the hope that, by renewed inquiries, some information might be obtained, which had been suppressed, or refused, at the time Mr. Byngham and Mr. Dermont had been at that place.

On leaving Devonshire, our hero had been variously affected. He had, as the reader knows, gone early to Brookdale, to carry some books Lady Maria had made a point of having returned, lest any accident should happen to them. When he arrived, the servant said he had orders to request he would replace the books himself in Lady Maria's library. Thither Frederick immediately proceeded; and was much surprised, at so early an hour, to find her ladyship there reading. She extended her hand; and, with an approving smile, which, being a very rare guest on her countenance, Frederick had learnt to value,—thanked him for the trouble he had taken: adding, “This is my *sanctum*, Mr. Lawrence: but I wish to inform you, that any, or all, the books here are always at your service; and that, on your return to Devonshire, I shall be glad to see you here, when you have no more agreeable way of spending your time.”



Frederick bowed respectfully ; and she continued,—“ You know reading is my delight : but it is not always pleasant to read alone ; one naturally wishes some enlightened friend to share our pleasure, and with whom we may compare our observations. The Earl finds no longer the same pleasure in books he used to do ; my good aunt does not read my books ; and my brother, at present, none at all. Thus mine is a solitary pleasure.”—She paused : but Frederick had nothing ready to answer, and she proceeded,—“ You seem to have read much for your age ; and, by the little I have been able to discover of your reading, I think our tastes are similar.”

Frederick now summoned up sufficient courage to break this third pause ; and he answered, that she did him a great deal of honour,—he should be proud of the compliment ; but he feared he did not deserve it.

“ That is a point we can better deter-

mine on a future day," said Lady Maria, with another of her most agreeable smiles : " now, you can only promise that hence-forward you will not be a stranger to this apartment."

He assured her he should always be most happy to avail himself of her goodness. Books, college, and their neighbours, then successively furnished conversation ; among the latter of whom Emma Dermont was particularly distinguished on this occasion by Lady Maria, who spoke of her as a most charming child, adding,—“ Since the narrow escape she lately had, and the essential service she received from you, I must think, Mr. Lawrence, that your interest for your little friend cannot but have been considerably increased.”

Though there was nothing in this remark but what was very natural, and what Frederick might readily have acknowledged, to any one else, was actually the case ; yet there was in her ladyship's

look and manner, as she spoke, so earnest an expression of a wish to examine his countenance, and penetrate his most inward thoughts, that he became perfectly embarrassed : and began several sentences, though unable to finish any.

His fair inquisitor kept her eyes for a moment fixed upon him ; then, good-humouredly pitying his confusion, she told him, laughing, that she had no desire to penetrate his secrets, and immediately changed the subject to his sister ; then to the profession she understood he had chosen, and in which an uncle of hers, she said, had risen to great distinction. She then talked of Oxford, its buildings, its neighbourhood ; till Frederick, rising, expressed his fear that he had trespassed too long upon her time. But she assured him she was perfectly disengaged till ten o'clock ; of which there yet wanted nearly half an hour. Much, however, as her young visitor had been gratified by the condescending familiarity, and really en-

tertained by the very agreeable conversation, of a woman of Lady Maria Carmaine's superior attractions and accomplishments, he wished to join the breakfast-table at Mr. Dermont's. He therefore took leave of her ladyship ; who told him, she should be very glad when his return permitted the renewal of his acquaintance.

Frederick Lawrence was exactly of an age and disposition to appreciate most highly such attentions as we have just described : for what man, under twenty, is capable of resisting the attractions of rank, sense, and a sufficient share of youth and beauty ; particularly when aided by refined, unperceived arts, which female acuteness can so successfully command, and which female preference, in the present case, so strongly prompted. We will then confess that his youthful vanity was somewhat flattered ; and that, on quitting Brookdale, he thought Lady Maria a very charming woman, and by no means the haughty, supercilious cha-

racter most people, and even Julia, described her.

To these agreeable reflections succeeded others not less pleasing. He recollected the confusion he had betrayed when questioned by Lady Maria about Emma Dermont; and, though he would fain have attributed it solely to the manner in which the subject was introduced, yet he could not but be sensible at this moment, for the first time, that his heart had indeed felt a much warmer interest for the lovely girl since her accident. But the circumstance appeared to him so perfectly natural, that he wondered he should have experienced the slightest confusion on the occasion.

The pleasing image of this sweet plaything of so many of his youthful hours, stole also at this moment on his mind, with such irresistible, but soft, attractions, that his reason took no alarm; while his fancy helped to forge the silken

chain by which he was unconsciously fettering his affection.

On the morning of Frederick's departure, Mr. Dermont had not been able to refuse himself the pleasure of seeing him once more, before he quitted, what to him had been, the paternal roof. Emma slept in a room adjoining that occupied by her father and mother ; and, on hearing that the former was rising, she requested leave to get up also, and make breakfast, for the last time, for poor Frederick. This could not be refused ; and the travellers were agreeably surprised by seeing their young favourite ready, by five o'clock in the morning, to attend to their comfort.

At the moment of parting, Frederick, who had reserved his adieus to Emma for the last, felt a very unusual trepidation as he attempted to kiss her ; as he had always done, on the slightest separation. Emma noticed what appeared to her reserve, and more than shared the

agitation, as she almost unconsciously turned away her blushing face, and sought to hide the starting tears.

“Come, come,” said Mr. Dermont, somewhat seriously, “this is very childish behaviour in you both: make haste, and shake hands. There! Edward is waiting for you, Frederick. God bless and prosper you now and ever.”—He then shook him heartily by the hand, saw him seated in the carriage; and immediately returned to his daughter; but she had escaped to her room.

This anxious friend had not waited till the last moment to impress the mind of his pupil with the few instructions he thought he might yet want. He knew it was well stored with every honourable and virtuous principle; and what he had of late chiefly sought to guard him against, was the encouraging of too great a susceptibility of feeling, which he sometimes feared might tend to enervate or mislead his ardent character. They

had spent several hours the preceding evening in private confidence, during which Frederick had imparted to him the discovery made by Julia.

Mr. Dermont thought this a circumstance not much to be regretted,—as she did not appear so greatly affected as Frederick had apprehended she would have been ; and also, as it might possibly check a vivacity of temper, which, however delightful to behold in early life, might sometimes proceed too far in a young woman. “Not,” added he, “that I have many fears for our Julia ; whose virtues have, I trust, taken too deep root not to bring forth the happiest fruits.”

Before they had parted for the night,—as, with the real fondness of a parent, Mr. Dermont still retained the hand of Frederick locked within his own,—he urged another and another argument, favourable to virtue and friendly caution. “It has been, dear Frederick,” he finally



said, “ my pleasure, not only to store your mind with useful knowledge ; but to impress strongly upon it the necessity of moderation and religious self-government, as constituting the principal and essential ingredients of your happiness. Your ingenuous disposition first called forth, then increased, my exertions ; and I must add, that your early virtues have amply rewarded them. The scene of your life is going to be changed ; the circle of your pleasures and your duties to be both varied and enlarged : new objects will solicit your passions, may render them clamorous. My anxiety and affection, perhaps, increase the dangers which threaten your future peace : yet I will not, I cannot, distrust you.

“ Of deliberate wickedness I believe you wholly incapable : but there are sudden temptations, which will sometimes surprise the most wakeful vigilance ; there is a social sympathy, which may ensnare,—there is a dread of ridicule,

whose mighty force may overpower,—your unguarded mind. On these trying occasions, ‘be still thyself;’ reverence the suggestions of your own excellent heart; realize my fondest hopes: be virtuous; be happy.”

Much as Mr. Dermont loved the society of Frederick, his removal just at this time was, in his opinion, most desirable. Long used to read in his open countenance every emotion that swayed his feelings, he had perceived, before Frederick was himself aware of the change, that the love he had felt for Emma as a child was gradually ripening into sensations of a more serious tendency. And, though his affection for him was truly that of a father, he trembled lest the heart of his daughter, scarcely removed from childhood, should be assailed, and made to feel the restless anxieties of an early attachment; which time, or unforeseen events, as well as the natural instability of youth, might cause one or both

parties to repent. Absence, he knew, was, at Frederick's age, an almost infallible remedy in these cases.

With respect to Emma, he determined carefully to watch her; and, if he had reason to believe that Frederick engaged too much of her thoughts, he would certainly prevent their meeting, till time should have destroyed or confirmed what could now be but a childish preference. In pursuance of this plan, shortly after Frederick's departure, Mr. and Mrs. Dermont, with their daughter, went into the North, to visit some relations of the latter; a change highly beneficial to Emma, whose health had appeared delicate since her fright, while her spirits had evidently suffered from the loss of the companion she had ever found in Frederick Lawrence.

The day after Frederick left her, was to Julia the most melancholy one she had ever known. In whatever direction she walked, rode, or even turned her eyes,

some object presented itself to remind her of her loss, and she felt a void not known before.

Lady Montrevor and Caroline endeavoured to console and amuse her; but for some time their affectionate efforts were unsuccessful, till by degrees her thoughts began to turn towards the pleasure she should derive from her brother's first letter.

At length the morning came that brought the welcome packet. Lady Montrevor, with Caroline and Julia, had walked over to call on Mrs. Huntley; where the servant had orders to stop, as he returned from Exeter with the letters. The two young ladies were engaged in looking over Miss Huntley's embroidery frame, when Lady Maria Carlmaine, with her brother and Mr. Selwyn, entered. Lady Maria had seldom condescended to take much notice of Julia Lawrence, whom she considered as a giddy girl, made pert and conceited by

beauty and indulgence. Julia, in return, disliked her ladyship's manners, and in general proudly shunned her company, whenever it was in her power. On this occasion, however, Lady Maria addressed her with marked attention, and, with great good-humour, asked her if she had heard of the travellers. Julia answered in the negative, but said she expected a letter this day, without fail.

While she spoke, she observed Lord Carlmaine give a packet of letters to Lady Montrevor, which, he said, he had just taken from the servant at the door, that he might have the pleasure of presenting them himself. Julia instantly sprang forward, with looks of anxious inquiry. When she had hastily glanced at the directions of each, the colour, which had for a few moments been varying in her cheeks, was beginning to settle into a deadly paleness; and her fine eyes were already swimming in tears, when Selwyn exclaimed, with suppressed

agitation, "Give the letter, Carlmaine, and relieve Miss Lawrence's anxiety!" The lately curdled blood now rushed back in joyous riot to Julia's face, as she snatched the packet from the up-raised hand of his lordship, who was beginning to talk of terms of capitulation.

She instantly seated herself, and, alike unmindful of all forms of ceremony, and of the attentive gaze of the two gentlemen immediately opposite her, read through a long letter from Frederick; in which he gave her the journal of every hour since they parted, interspersed with agreeable and affectionate observations.

Julia's countenance was ever that fair mirror in which all might instantly read the workings of her inward thoughts; and, as she perused this first, this interesting, letter, the varied sensations of pleased impatience, grateful affection, and melting tenderness, passed in speaking distinctness over her expressive features. As Selwyn almost unconsciously

gazed, his softened penetrated soul wandered far and wide into the regions of fancy ; where, for a moment, he contemplated the effects of love, wedded love, in a heart capable of such warmth of feeling. Nay, he for an instant imagined himself the object of that love, and sensations of ideal bliss thrilled through his bosom.

Something approaching to the same feelings passed also through the mind of Carlmaine : but, oh ! how much was the bright imagery tarnished and disfigured. To Selwyn, the flitting vision had offered a ministering angel of chastened joy and pure connubial happiness, in whose dear company months, years, and life itself, would pass in one sweet round of enjoyment and tranquillity. But, to the distempered and poisoned mind of his relation, Julia appeared but as the most lovely woman he had yet beheld, and every way calculated to heighten his

guilty hopes and encourage his dishonourable pursuit.

When there remained not another word to read, Julia arose, and, colouring highly on seeing she had been, to many of the party, an object of silent observation, she said, "When I tell you, my dear Mrs. Huntley, that this is the first letter I have ever received in my whole life from my brother, I hope you will kindly pardon my eagerness to read it."

The old lady assured her no excuse was necessary for such amiable sensibility; adding, that her countenance was too indicative of good news to warrant any inquiries concerning the travellers.

Julia replied, they were quite well; and, turning to Lady Montrevor, she said, "You shall see Frederick's letter as soon as we get home, my dear madam: as yet, I cannot consent to part with it."

Her ladyship answered, smiling, that



she would endeavour to wait with patience.

Julia was then beginning to question Caroline about a letter she had perceived directed to her in Edward's hand ; but, suddenly recollecting herself, she stopped, with very unusual discretion for her, till they had quitted the party ; when, finding that this letter still remained unopened, she said in a low voice, while Lady Montrevor had advanced rather before, " Now, Caroline, you may look at your letter. Oh, how much more agreeable is a brother as a correspondent than a cousin ! Now, no one thought any more of my rudely reading a letter in company than I did myself ; but certainly *you* should not appear too anxious.—Well, I have no cousin ; and, as for a lover, I am not sure I should like one, if, in consequence, my actions were to be so much restrained."

" Ah, Julia !" said Caroline, laughing,

“ you will doubtless learn some day to restrain them yourself.”

“ In the mean time I will, as Frederick charged me, study you as my model ;” answered Julia : and, running off to Lady Montrevor, she left her friend to the perusal of Edward’s letter as she walked along.

The contents were of no particular interest, being chiefly confined to the description of the friend’s house at which they had stopped, and the information of their safe arrival at Oxford. Miss Montrevor’s disposition was in no way exacting ; she was therefore quite satisfied with Edward’s moderately-kind epistle, and, content with the simple act of his having written to her without any particular expression of regard towards Julia, her mind was easy, and she condemned, as groundless and unjust, her late feelings of jealousy.

The answering of Frederick’s letter

was another source of new delight to our heroine, which she prolonged as much as was in her power, by entering into the most minute details of all the important and unimportant events that had occurred at Arlingham and its vicinity during the last unusually long week. This agreeable duty dispatched, Julia's natural vivacity gradually returned. By degrees, also, the most painful part of the emotions excited by the disclosure of the circumstances relative to her mother became softened, and at last gave way to the pleasing structures her warm, romantic imagination took delight in erecting.

Though Julia certainly possessed, in a very eminent degree, some few of the rare qualities of which true-bred heroines are composed, she was most miserably deficient in many others. For instance: she could not rest satisfied with her secret cogitations and silent wonderings on the surprising history of the casket and

its contents. Lady Montrevor, who had observed the pernicious tendency of Julia's temper to be visionary, indiscreet, and sanguine, justly considering the circumstances with which she had lately become acquainted as exactly calculated to increase that dangerous turn of mind, had forbidden the renewal of all discussions on the subject, which, she observed, could only be useless and unsatisfactory.

Thus denied the privilege of talking with Lady Montrevor on particulars which so frequently occupied all her thoughts, Julia most imprudently had recourse to her old friend Ursula; from whom she not only obtained an ever-ready hearing, but also never-dying fuel for her most wild and chimerical conjectures.

Ursula was really much attached to Julia, and the romantic fire of her own imagination, kindled in the days of youth by the chivalrous songs and legends so peculiar to her native country, was even

now far from being extinct : she therefore felt frequently persuaded of the truth of the agreeable suppositions, or rather prophecies, with which she amused the charmed ear of her young favourite. While she readily promised the requested secrecy, she expressed the most anxious hope that the Virgin Mary, whom she would never cease assailing with her prayers, would not only restore to light the rich miniature which had been purloined, but also detect all who had any wicked hand in causing such misfortunes.

In extenuation of this ill-placed confidence, let us be permitted to remind the reader that Ursula was a woman of superior education to the generality of persons in her situation ; that Julia had been accustomed to look up to her as an humble instructress, to whom, from her earliest years, she had been in the habit of confiding every emotion of her heart, either of joy or sorrow, anger or dissatisfaction,

—secure, on every occasion, of meeting sympathy and approval ; and, lastly, that this was the first secret Julia had ever had to keep. This we again request leave to urge in mitigation of what we acknowledge a most indecorous confidence.

## CHAPTER II.

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“ — trifies such as these  
To serious mischiefs lead.”

FRANCIS'S HORACE.

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SIR CHARLES BENWELL and Mr. Fairbank still continued their assiduities to Miss Montrevor, greatly to her annoyance, as she dared not explain to either of them the inutility of their pursuit. One day, being alone with her father and mother, she ventured to mention to the former her disapprobation of their attentions. Lord Montrevor immediately expressed the most violent displeasure, and commanded his daughter to treat both his friends with the civility to which they were entitled,—as men to whom his honour was pledged that they should have an opportunity of recommending themselves to

her. Then seeing that she appeared shocked, he continued, in a softened voice, "You are of an age, Caroline, when young ladies have no objection to be wooed; and, though I do not mean to exercise any decided violence over your inclinations, I do expect that a proper deference should be paid to my wishes, which I will now once for all explain, and then leave it to your mother's care to dispose you to obedience. I do not urge much in favour of Sir Charles Benwell; as his education and habits are so very different from yours, that you could not probably be happy with him: but he must not be offended. Respecting Mr. Fairbank, the case is materially different. His situation and fortune render him a most desirable alliance; and he is so good-natured that he will certainly make an indulgent husband."

Perceiving her daughter turn pale, Lady Montrevor made a sign for her to leave the room. This her father would



have prevented, his feelings not being yet so hardened as to enable him to bear unmoved the mild representations of the wife he neglected. Feeling, therefore, something like protection in the presence of a third person, he endeavoured to retain Caroline ; but she was so much affected by what had already passed, that she gladly obeyed her mother, who, as soon as she had withdrawn, endeavouring to speak with firmness and composure, said, “ Is, then, Mr. Fairbank, my Lord, the man to whom you would confide the happiness of an only child ? Can you seriously ask your daughter to become the wife of one you so justly despise ? Oh, Montrevor ! do not, by so cruel an act, complete my sufferings. Caroline has learnt to bear a father’s indifference and neglect, and duty and affection urge her to comply with all your wishes ; but let her not have to bend under an unjust exercise of authority. Her heart has al-

ready made its election, and we hoped you would approve her choice."

"She must not think of Edward!" interrupted his lordship, with some emotion; "she may do much better: it is a childish fancy, which a short time will make her forget."

"Good heaven, William! you do not seriously intend to withdraw your word from my brother?"

"Madam, I never gave my word;" he replied, endeavouring to drown in anger the more gentle feelings struggling in his bosom. "You may have settled the affair between you, for any thing I know; but, as I never approved the connexion, I never positively gave my consent." Then, speaking quick and in a louder voice, to avoid interruption, and to get rid of the subject, he continued, "In short, madam, my word is at this time actually given to Mr. Fairbank. I am under great—very great—pecuniary—

obligations ; and Caroline must pay the debt, for, by G—, I cannot.”

He then hurried out of the room in great agitation, leaving his astonished wife grieved and alarmed. Caroline soon joined her ; and, though her mother did not repeat all that had passed, she learnt sufficient to increase her uneasiness. Lady Montrevor exerted herself to raise the drooping spirit of her daughter, saying she should immediately solicit the interposition of her brother ; and, while she embraced her, she, for the first time in her sorrowful life, relieved her own mind by giving utterance to her long-suppressed grief.

Her own sufferings had never wrung a single complaint or resentful expression from her aching heart ; but, when she saw that her beloved Caroline was threatened with unfeeling severity and persecution, her long-exerted fortitude was subdued, and expressions of reproachful anguish and despair found utterance.

Soon, however, these impassioned feelings disappeared before the native dignity and habitual virtue of her mind, and she condemned the weakness to which she had unwarily yielded. In the warmth of her maternal affection, she found sufficient energy to rouse that spirit which she had never summoned in her own favour, but which she was determined fully to exert for the happiness of her child, and to prevent the meditated sacrifice.

“ Fear not, my love,” said she to her daughter ; “ severe as the task may be, I will support you in resisting the wishes of your infatuated father ; and I will hope that he may one day thank me for preventing the purchase of a few selfish gratifications, or the absence of some inconveniences, at the expense of your peace.”

Thus affectionately consoled, Caroline’s fears and sorrows abated ; and, casting with fond reliance most of her cares upon her mother, she endeavoured to hope her father would, on reflection,

give up intentions which would meet with such decided opposition.

Mr. Fairbank, who had lately been Lord Montrevor's guest, was now absent for some days on a visit to Brookdale ; and Sir Charles Benwell was at this time staying with Mr. Huntley ; circumstances that undoubtedly assisted much in restoring Caroline's composure.

Lady Montrevor determined to seize the first opportunity of telling her husband that, if he did not immediately discourage the addresses of the above gentlemen, she would, on the first suitable occasion, certainly inform them that her daughter begged to decline the honour of their attentions.

Such was the state of affairs at Arlingham, when, as the family were one morning at breakfast, a carriage drove up to the door, and Mr. Fairbank alighted ; but had scarcely done so, when Sir Charles Benwell also appeared, mounted on a horse whose reeking sides declared

what had been the impatience and haste of the rider.

The Baronet instantly dismounted, and, brushing by Mr. Fairbank, entered the breakfast-room, closely followed by the latter, who endeavoured to keep him back, while, in a hurried manner, he said, "Lord Montrevor, I must beg to speak with you immediately."

"No, my Lord," hastily interrupted Fairbank, "*I* must insist upon having an explanation with you *first*;—my claims—"

"D—n your claims," cried Sir Charles, with ungovernable passion. "Begone, you epitome of a perfumer's shop, and never attempt to contend with men."

He would then have persuaded Lord Montrevor to leave the room with him; but this the latter positively refused, and, expressing much indignation at Sir Charles's behaviour, directed his attention to Mr. Fairbank, who sat in a violent rage, fanning himself with his handker-

chief; and, wholly regardless of Lord Montrevor's efforts to pacify him, continuing to mutter half aloud, "Curse his insolence—the brute! He shall give me satisfaction—No; I will not debase myself by fighting such a savage, the law shall revenge me."

"Sir," said Lord Montrevor, fiercely to Sir Charles, "this behaviour is as incomprehensible as displeasing to me."

"Right, my Lord," cried Fairbank, with rising courage, and quitting the sofa where he had thrown himself; "he acts like a barbarian or a madman; and if—"

"Dare to add another abusive word, and my whip shall answer you;" whispered the enraged Baronet in his ear.

"Fellow," replied his antagonist, "you shall no longer shock my ears and agitate my nerves by your insulting language; but you may depend upon hearing from me."

Saying this, he hastily left the room,

accompanied by a loud halloo from Sir Charles Benwell ; while Lord Montrevor followed, vainly endeavouring to pacify and detain his young friend, who would listen to nothing he could say, but drove in great anger from the door, loudly threatening vengeance on the head of his enemy.

This interruption, and all that had passed, had been so sudden and surprising, that Lady Montrevor had not thought of withdrawing ; and now, having some idea of the meaning of the scene, she wished, on Caroline's account, to hear the result. She therefore remained in the room, but desired Caroline and Julia to retire. Miss Montrevor gladly obeyed ; but the latter, who had been much entertained by the *ouverture*, was desirous also of seeing the *finale*. Though, therefore, she arose, she loitered in the room till Lord Montrevor returned ; who, with rage and vexation in his countenance, haughtily demanded of Sir Charles



Benwell an explanation of his strange conduct.

“ Few words are necessary, my Lord ;” answered Sir Charles, with some resentment. “ You know I love your daughter, and that, for some reason or other, with which I am unacquainted, you have avoided giving me any decided answer on the subject. I had reason to believe the gentleman who has just left us intended, in an underhanded way, to thwart my pretensions ; and thinking, after what has passed between your lordship and myself, that my wishes were not displeasing to you, I was desirous of being beforehand with him. He, it appears, suspected the nature of my errand ; and thus you know the whole affair. And now, having driven my rival off the field, I trust you will tell me if I have any chance of success with Miss Montrevor and yourself.”

“ None whatever, Sir,” haughtily answered Lord Montrevor, whose vexation

at the manner in which Fairbank had been driven away was converted into rage by that part of the Baronet's speech which he felt was an allusion to the pecuniary accommodations his growing necessities had obliged him to accept; "nor shall you ever again have an opportunity of insulting me in the persons of my friends in this house. If you are dissatisfied, I will answer you at some favourable opportunity:—you understand me, I suppose."

"Perfectly, my Lord," replied Benwell, trembling with passion; "but I value my own peace of mind too highly to wish for the explanation to which you allude."

Then turning to Lady Montrevor, who sat in evident alarm, he added, "Madam, before I take my leave, allow me to say how proud I should have been this morning to have formed an alliance with your family, and to have contributed to the happiness of your daughter; but, as it is,

I can only hope she may meet with a man disposed to value her as I would have done."

He then hastily quitted the house in considerable emotion. Lord Montrevor shortly after rode out in evident ill-humour, without exchanging a word with his wife on the late meeting. Lady Montrevor was not wholly without uneasiness respecting its consequences; although the words of Sir Charles, and the effeminate character of Fairbank, tended greatly to remove the alarm she at first conceived: while she flattered herself and Caroline, that one good effect arising from the unpleasant occurrences of the morning would, probably, be the release of the latter from the addresses of both gentlemen.

Julia had, in the mean time, been a silent, unobserved, but not uninterested, spectator of the whole transaction. At first she had entered, with a natural love of harmless mirth, into the scene; but,

as it advanced, a secret and painful consciousness arose in her mind, that she was perhaps a party concerned in producing what threatened to be of serious consequence; and apprehension, more than curiosity, rivetted her to the spot. In truth, she had good ground for this fear.

As she had by degrees recovered her natural flow of spirits, so gradually did the pleasure she took in the lively society of Lord Carlmaine revive. Not that she forgot the advice of her brother; but she had most carefully examined her heart, where she found his lordship occupied positively no place, except that of an agreeable man; who, being ever ready to promote the general amusement, and hers in particular, was a very desirable acquisition to the society of the neighbourhood. She therefore felt assured she was in no danger of losing her heart. Indeed, after much reflection,—which Frederick's caution had given rise to,

—she was convinced, that Lord Carlmaine, however graceful in his person, and pleasing in his manners, was not the man whom she should select for her regard. Her vanity was, however, flattered by his preference; and her disposition, prone to mirth and gaiety, accepted without scruple the amusement which his artful assiduities offered her.

He was entertaining in all common conversations; and, by many nameless attentions, she acknowledged that he strongly recommended himself: but, with such powerful passports in his favour, her heart told her, that the friend of her bosom, and the protector of her inexperienced youth, must possess those estimable qualities, whose least merit is that which most attracts the notice and approval of common observers. Here the recollections of Selwyn's strong mind and honourable principles almost naturally arose to her thoughts, and cast into

deep shade the superficial advantages of address and manners of his cousin. But then, with feelings of lessening indifference, Julia reflected, how almost impossible it was that a reciprocal preference should ever exist where, on one side, affection was almost frightened away by the austerity of unyielding virtue ; and, on the other, was withheld from an unreasonable expectation of perfection.

After this satisfactory examination of her own feelings, she passed to a scrutiny of Lord Carlmaine's behaviour to her. In this she could find nothing to excite the least suspicion, that he had any other view in his good-humoured notice of her, than their mutual amusement. Surrounded thus on all sides by a sense of security, and choosing to imagine that her brother's sole reason for cautioning her against a too-easy familiarity with his lordship, was from apprehension of

her becoming attached to him, Julia sought not to check his increasing attentions.

Lord Carlmaine, having determined to clothe his approaches to the heart of our heroine in the unsuspecting garb of cheerful indifference, was ever, though cautiously, endeavouring to recommend himself to her notice, and to seize and lead still farther every flight of her lively imagination; well pleased when one of her enchanting smiles, or familiar bravos, repaid and encouraged his efforts. The great intimacy that had ever subsisted between Lady Montrevor and Mr. Huntley's family facilitated an intercourse Lord Carlmaine so ardently desired. From Arlingham to Brookdale Parsonage was always a favourite walk or ride with Caroline and Julia; where they now frequently met the junior part of Lord Ashmore's family. In one of these morning excursions they found Lady Eleanor Carlmaine, with her nephew; soon after,

Mr. Stephen Thornton, with his sister Jessy, joined the party.

Mr. and Mrs. Huntley were from home, and Miss Huntley confined to the sofa by a sprained ankle. After sitting a short time, with some appearance of restlessness, Lady Eleanor suddenly proposed, that the party should walk, and call upon Lady Maria ; who was suffering from a severe cold. The plan was readily acceded to by all but Caroline, who declared her intention of keeping Miss Huntley company till their return ; and the three ladies, escorted by Lord Carlmaine and Mr. Thornton, set out.

The design of Lady Eleanor was soon very apparent ; for, accepting the offered arm of Stephen, she quickly advanced so far beyond the rest of the party, as to prevent the possibility of their hearing the subject of each other's conversation. This manœuvre furnished much matter of pleasantry to the lively trio that followed.



Lord Carlmaine, in particular, was much amused by what he called his aunt's "gentle flurry," and the enlivening effect produced on the sombre, inanimate features of young Thornton. Once Lady Eleanor seemed to recollect that her avant-march might be liable to remark; and, slackening her pace, she entered into conversation with Jessy, leaving Stephen to plod on behind. Lord Carlmaine turned round, and observing that the features of Strephon (as he had lately called him,) had resumed their heavy cast, he exclaimed, with much bombast, addressing Julia, and pointing to young Thornton,—

"Without the smile from partial beauty won,  
Lo! what were man!—a world without a sun."

"You always, my lord," said the unsuspicious Stephen, "have a very good knack at saying smart things. Beauty is, indeed, very like the sun,—in and out, and never lasting."—Then winking

significantly at Julia, (for whom he thought the compliment intended,) he joined her ladyship, and they both again walked forward, leaving their friends almost convulsed with laughter.

Jessy then diverted the conversation, by asking, if Miss Montrevor had been so hard-hearted as to refuse Mr. Fairbank ; who, she understood, was no longer a guest at Arlingham.

Julia answered, that the gentleman had certainly not been dismissed, as he had never disclosed his mind : “ but,” she continued, “ he is so desperately in love, that I really pity him ; as I know he has no chance.”

“ Nor our friend the baronet either, if I mistake not,” said Lord Carlmaine.

“ No, no,” answered Julia : “ Miss Montrevor is too bright a diamond for such rough setting, however intrinsically good : nor would I see it shine as Mr. Fairbank’s. It is formed to shed its lustre over scenes of domestic happiness, for

which neither of these gentlemen seem suited. One she would despise, and to the other, half her worth would be useless."

Many animated observations followed upon the ridiculous contrast between the rivals,—of whom Julia said she heartily wished her friend fairly rid; adding, with inconsiderate pleasantry,—“How I should like to send an anonymous letter to each of them, advising an immediate application to Lord Montrevor; stating, that I knew such was the intention of the rival candidate, and that no time was to be lost,—as much might depend upon the first proposal.”

The idea was highly approved by Jessy and Lord Carlmaine: the latter took down notes of instruction (as he called them,) in his pocket-book; saying, he should have great pleasure, on this occasion, in being her amanuensis. Julia reminded him to be careful in disguising his hand; and then wholly dismissed

from her mind a *foolish joke*,—the effect only of her buoyant spirits, and wholly without premeditation or design. In this light Jessy Thornton had also considered it. And so did Lord Carlmaine ; but to his wily mind, which was ever on the watch, this unguarded conversation immediately presented an opportunity ; which, if judiciously managed, might draw the unwary girl into an entanglement, productive of some agreeable consequences to himself. Nothing farther occurred, however, on the subject at this time. The intended visit was paid to Lady Maria, with whom they found Selwyn ; who felt a momentary sensation of pain at seeing his cousin the favoured companion of Julia. He could not refuse himself the pleasure of walking back with her ; when the conversation, by his means, assumed a very different turn to what it had before taken.

Julia was sensible of the difference, and was well pleased to listen, instead of

furnishing herself the chief subject, as in the first part of the walk. Her mind was enlightened, and discriminating; consequently, when unbiassed by prejudice, and not pre-occupied by her usual wish for amusement, capable of very justly appreciating the manly sense, and delicate refinement, that peculiarly marked whatever fell from the lips of Selwyn. And, when addressing himself to her, there was a soft insinuating expression of tenderness in his eyes, that conveyed to her heart a more gratifying sensation than all the flattering compliments of Lord Carlmaine had ever been able to excite.

Often, however, before this pleasing emotion was confirmed, or had time to subside, some look or speech of hers recalled the fading caution of Selwyn; when Julia, with mingled regret and anger, noticed his now well-known penetrating look of scrutiny, doubt, and suspicion; and she would turn, with

affected indifference and assumed vivacity, to Lord Carlmaine, or any one else, who happened to be near her.

The ill-timed joke which Julia had permitted herself, respecting Sir Charles Benwell and Mr. Fairbank, never recurred to her thoughts ; till the scene between them at Arlingham, not only brought it to her recollection, but, at the same time, excited sincere remorse : for, from what had been said by the gentlemen on that occasion, she was almost certain Lord Carlmaine had actually effected the foolish scheme she had most innocently suggested, without the smallest idea of its being put in practice.

The more she thought of all that had passed, the more bitter became her self-reproaches, for the unintentional part she had taken in the business ; and, wholly unable to quiet her fears, she sought Lady Montrevor, determined to confess the whole affair, and procure from her pardon and consolation.

Her ladyship was, unfortunately, not to be found. When she left the breakfast-room, Julia, engrossed by the unpleasant recollections and emotions of her mind, still occupied one corner of it, unobserved by Lady Montrevor, who hastened to her daughter's apartment, to talk over what had just occurred. Julia, after seeking her in vain in several other rooms, followed her to that of Miss Montrevor; but her ladyship, with Caroline, had just quitted it by another door. It now occurred to Julia, that Lady Montrevor must have gone out; and, determined not to rest till she had relieved her mind from the weight that at this moment oppressed it, she ran down to one of the lodges in the Park; knowing the occupier was unwell, and thinking her ladyship was probably gone to see her.

As she approached the gate, Lord Carlmaine, to her surprise, suddenly rode up; and, instantly dismounting,

begged to say a few words to her. She answered only by saying,—“I hope, my lord, I have unnecessarily frightened myself; and that you never thought again of our foolish conversation the other day, about Mr. Fairbank and Sir Charles Benwell.”

“Indeed, I did think of it, and have done as you desired me, my dear Miss Lawrence;” he replied.

“Good heavens! how could you so misunderstand me? Oh dear! how much I am to blame!”

Lord Carlmaine seized her uplifted hand; and, pressing it with respectful interest, said,—“Do not agitate yourself; this will all blow over. We are both, perhaps, to blame; but, if we keep our own counsel, the joke will pass off, and the authors of it will not be discovered.”

Julia hastily withdrew her hand; and, shrinking with native purity from the idea of being thus familiarly associated



with a young man in a transaction of a nature to require concealment, she said, rather haughtily, and with firmness,—“I beg your pardon, my lord; there shall be no secrecy in the business: I am, at this moment, in search of Lady Montrevor, for the purpose of making her acquainted with the whole of my imprudence.”

This was not the result Lord Carmaine meditated; and he determined, if possible, to prevent it: but, seeing some one advancing from the house, he endeavoured to persuade Julia to enter for a moment the lodge; but in vain: and he then said,—“For God’s sake, Miss Lawrence, think what you are going to do. Besides exposing your own character to public animadversions and censure, you will unnecessarily endanger the lives of Sir Charles Benwell and Mr. Fairbank,—to say nothing of myself: for, if it is known I am the author of those confounded letters,—which you unfortu-

nately dictated, and I, who ought to have known better, imprudently wrote,—they cannot possibly avoid calling me out.”

“Oh, heavens!” exclaimed Julia, shuddering.

“Nothing of all this can happen,” said his lordship, “if you promise to keep the whole a secret.”

“I will promise any thing,” she returned, with great agitation, “to prevent such terrible consequences.”

“I will rely then on your word,” he answered; “and shall act accordingly; so mind, and be very guarded and discreet: leave every thing to me, and all shall be settled. Here is a note I had written on the subject, and which I hoped to have an opportunity of giving you, if I had found it impossible to speak to you. What I say about Jessy Thornton you may trust:” saying this, he hastily put the note into her hand, and, mounting his horse, rode away.

Julia made an attempt to reject the

note ; but, seeing at this moment Selwyn, with his gun, cross a stile from an opposite field, she hastily put it into her pocket ; and, with secret vexation, that this last unlucky circumstance was added to her other distressing feelings, she returned with precipitation to the house.

## CHAPTER III.

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“ I would establish a court of honour, with a power of awarding those submissions and acknowledgments, which it is generally the purpose of a challenge to obtain.”

PALEY ON DUELLING.

“ How long shall tyrant custom bind  
In slavish chains the human mind ?  
How long shall false fantastic Honour draw  
The vengeful sword, with fury fell,  
And ranc'rous Malice, dark as hell,  
In spite of Reason's rule, and Nature's eldest law ?”

SOMERVILLE.

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ON leaving home, Lord Montrevor hastened to Brookdale,—galled by many contending recollections, and execrating the follies and vices which now forced his proud soul to crouch before a man he despised. Some little remains of goodness aggravated the bitterness of these reflections, and might have led to a train of thinking ultimately favourable to virtue: he had at this time the courage even to contemplate the possibility of contending with habits of long and sturdy growth; to view with composure

the envenomed ridicule of his vicious companions; and to form the wish of emancipating himself, by a desperate struggle, from the tyranny of passions, whose gratification was now succeeded by satiety and unmixed abhorrence.

The time, indeed, seemed to be propitious; forsaken virtue might have perhaps recovered her long-lost votary; but the magnitude and complication of Lord Montrevor's pecuniary difficulties soon recurred to his recollection, and imperiously urged the necessity of continuing his present guilty course. He was indebted to Mr. Fairbank to a very considerable amount, and there was but one way of repaying him; if that failed, he had no resource,—so destitute had his extravagant habits rendered him.

When he arrived at Brookdale, he found that gentleman giving an account to the earl and his son of the indignities he had just received. The former con-

doled with him with all the seriousness he could command ; while Lord Carlmaine affirmed there was but one way of healing his wounded honour,—namely, to call Sir Charles out. This advice did not at all suit the nerves of his friend ; who had not yet recovered from his late agitation.

Being left alone with Mr. Fairbank, Montrevor expressed his concern for the ungentlemanly treatment he had met with under his roof. In answer to this, the former protested, that nothing but the blood of Sir Charles could wash away the injury he had received ; observing, that the insult had been offered him at Arlingham, and, consequently, was as great an affront to him (Lord Montrevor) as to himself. From thence he inferred, that his lordship was the person who ought to require satisfaction from Sir Charles Benwell ; insinuating, at the same time, that, much as he loved Miss Montrevor, nothing should induce him to

become the son-in-law of a man, who had seen him so grossly insulted in his house without resenting it.

At length Lord Montrevor was convinced, that nothing would appease the anger of this young man against Benwell but a duel; which his cowardice and effeminacy prevented his engaging in personally. He also felt assured, that, if he refused to step forward as his champion on this occasion, he would immediately be called upon for the payment of a sum he had no means of raising. Thus pressed by present fears and future hopes, and enslaved by his necessities, Lord Montrevor yielded to what Mr. Fairbank so evidently wished, and proposed writing to Sir Charles Benwell. Great difficulty now occurred in framing the letter; Fairbank being desirous that a challenge should be sent without any alternative: but to this Lord Montrevor positively objected.

It was settled, at last, that the baronet

should be required to make a decided, unconditional apology to Mr. Fairbank, both in the presence of Montrevor, and that of the ladies who had witnessed the affront. Finding this contemptible young man as implacable as cowardly, and that he was determined to relinquish no part of the unmanly concessions he required, Lord Montrevor immediately wrote the concerted letter.

Mr. Fairbank now gave as many weak testimonies of satisfaction as he had before shewn of anger and pusillanimity. He shook Lord Montrevor heartily by the hand, saying,—“Now I really believe, Montrevor, you are my friend; and, to prove that I will not be out-done in generosity, I swear that, when you return from your brush with that brutal baronet, I will give you up all the securities for the money I have lent you.”

“And, if I never return?” said Lord Montrevor, gloomily.

“Why, to be sure, that would be very



awkward," answered this kind friend, without the smallest emotion: "but, in that case, I would burn them; and thus your heirs would never be troubled with the business."

Amidst all the guilty wanderings of a heart not always vicious, Montrevor still retained some few latent sparks of almost extinguished virtue; which, if they did not light him to goodly deeds himself, shewed him plainly the faults of others. Thus it was on the present occasion; and he would instantly have turned in disgust from the cold and selfish being before him; but a moment's reflection taught him the policy of concealing his feelings, and he forced himself to express a proper sense of these friendly demonstrations. The important, but difficult, matter of finding immediately a second, was next discussed; and Lord Montrevor recollected a young naval officer at Exeter; to whom he wrote, explaining

the business, and enclosing the note to Sir Charles, with a request that it should be delivered without delay.

His lordship then called his servant, and gave the necessary orders in presence of Fairbank; whose vindictive spirit was so gratified by this prospect of the baronet's chastisement, that he cancelled the whole of Lord Montrevor's debt, by committing his several bonds to the flames.

At another time the gratitude of Montrevor would have been proportionate to the weight thus taken off his mind; but at this moment a consciousness of his degraded situation, and the contempt with which he regarded Mr. Fairbank, excited gloomy and impatient feelings, rather than a sense of obligation, or any sentiment of pleasure. He endeavoured to quiet his indignant spirit by reflecting, that, if he lived, he had earned by danger the money thus remitted; and, if he

fell,—why then it mattered not, and Fairbank would cheaply have bought his ignoble safety.

They then shook hands and parted: Mr. Fairbank meanly congratulating himself on the success of his plans, and Lord Montrevor thoroughly dissatisfied with his present situation; without, indeed, any oppressive or distinct fears of the personal danger to which he was about to be exposed: but disordered and goaded by the stings of a troubled conscience; restless, yet without a satisfactory motive of action: unable to stop; unwilling to proceed.

In less than an hour after this interview, Mr. Fairbank was on his way to town; anxious to escape the unpleasant flurry and nervous agitation to which a longer stay in the neighbourhood at this time would expose him. Reclining, in ease and safety, in his travelling chariot, and attended by his watchful friend and valet Blondin, he thought not of the danger to

which two of his fellow-creatures were exposed on his account. Or, if ugly ideas would arise, in spite of his efforts to keep them down, or if, while he dozed, bloody phantoms flitted before him, he quieted his mind, and charmed the frightful spectres, by recollecting, that such meetings daily took place, not only without fatal consequences, but even unattended with bloodshed. He also reflected, with much self-satisfaction, that he had paid Lord Montrevor very handsomely for the job ; and, as for the savage baronet, it did not much signify what happened to him : he was a great brute, and could never be missed in the civilized world.

Lord Montrevor immediately returned home, to await Sir Charles's apology, or his consent to meet him, at an early hour, the next morning. His mind was in too agitated a state to bear the presence of his family ; but, anxious to prevent all suspicions of the meeting in Lady Mon-

trevor, as soon as he heard, from Lieut. Cooper, that Sir Charles would be punctual to the appointment, he sought her ; and told her that urgent business called him to town ; and, as a farther deception, requested she would inform him immediately, if any thing occurred between Fairbank and Sir Charles : which, he added, he did not in the least expect, considering the peaceable disposition of the former. In answer to his wife's fears, that he might hear more from Sir Charles, Lord Montrevor reminded her of the declaration on that head made in the morning by the baronet.

Thus considerably re-assured, Lady Montrevor saw her husband depart, well satisfied that he should at this time quit a scene, which, she could not but fear, might be pregnant with danger. For still his safety was dear to her heart ; which, though often chilled by unkindness and neglect, was yet ever ready to admit the rekindling warmth of past

affection, on the slightest appearance of even a momentary return of that regard she had so long, and, alas! so vainly, sought to regain.

Lord Montrevor's object, in leaving home, was to secure the secrecy he could not command in his own house. He therefore went no farther than to one in the neighbourhood of the place that had been fixed upon for his meeting with Sir Charles; where his servant procured him accommodation.

He spent much of the night in writing to Lady Montrevor; till, unable to bear the agony of a mind torn by remorse, or to express the sensations that wrung his soul, he cast all that he had written into the fire; and, calling for brandy, drank till he had effectually drowned all discriminating sense of pleasure or suffering, and sunk into the lethargic sleep of intoxication. This debasing alternative was, indeed, the only one remaining, to the self-accusing Montrevor, as a refuge

from reflections which he could not banish ; and which habits of vicious indulgence rendered insupportable to a heart where some good feelings still kept their place.

From this state of oblivion he was roused at the appointed time ; and, with his senses scarcely sobered, he accompanied Lieut. Cooper, and the surgeon he had brought, to the place of meeting. The baronet was already there. The night, with him, had been spent in a very different way from that just described. He was constitutionally brave ; but had never before tried his courage in this way. His judgment condemned the practice, and his moral and religious feelings revolted against it. Lord Montrevor, too, was the father of the lovely woman for whom he felt a sincere attachment : no, he could not arm his hand against his life. Yet the communication he had received was couched in such offensive terms, that he had been unable to

answer it in any other way than by accepting the challenge ; though he still hoped to shun the serious result. He then applied himself to put his affairs in the best order the time would allow, in case his conciliatory endeavours proved fruitless ; determining to leave no effort untried, consistent with a just regard for his own honour, to avoid proceeding to painful extremities.

The friend who accompanied him, entered fully into his sentiments ; but they were met with insulting scorn by their opponents. Lord Montrevor was not in full possession of his reasoning faculties ; and his second was one of those blind sticklers for the phantom honour, who daily trample on the substantial part of that high quality, and unblushingly defraud the industrious tradesman of his due, or carry distress and agony into the bosom of families for the gratification of their licentious passions. Thus compelled, Sir Charles reluctantly took his stand.



Principles of religion and humanity, which did honour to his heart, unnerved his arm ; and his fire took no effect. Lord Montrevor was still less master of himself ; but he wounded Sir Charles in the shoulder, who let fall the pistol, and the seconds declared themselves satisfied.

The sight of the blood from Sir Charles's wound seemed instantly to dispel the mist from the senses of Lord Montrevor ; who, in unfeigned anxiety, supported his antagonist, expressing his regret for what had happened.

The baronet answered, that he was not materially hurt, and much wished that they should mutually forget all that had passed. Lord Montrevor assured him of his friendship ; and, having had the satisfaction of hearing from the surgeon there was no reason to fear the wound would prove mortal, he threw himself into his carriage, and proceeded towards London ; having requested Lieut.

Cooper to be the bearer of the news, and a note to Arlingham, and to use all proper caution in communicating it to Lady Montrevor.

We must do Lord Montrevor the justice to say, that he regretted much at this moment the unlucky absence of Mr. Byngham and Mr. Dermont; either of whom would, he felt, have much better acquitted themselves of such an errand than the messenger he sent.

From his late unusual depression and painful sensations, Lord Montrevor's spirits had now risen to an unnatural height, and his heart beat with joy at his late escape: not only from death,—whose fancied approach had chilled, for a moment, his faculties with horror,—but also from the anguish of having killed, or materially injured, a fellow-creature. All his late awakened feelings of remorse, and half-formed purposes of reformation, were dismissed as the recollections of a

feverish dream ; and he was impatient to lose them completely, in his accustomed scenes of dissipation.

It was, indeed, strictly true, that the art of forgetfulness was absolutely necessary to his peace : pleasure he eagerly, yet now vainly, sought ; but, in failure of this, occupation of any sort was welcomed by a mind, torn by corroding cares, and flying to oblivion, as its last, sad refuge.

Lady Montrevor did not miss the kind sympathy of a friend to prepare her for the unpleasant communication, with which Lieut. Cooper had been charged. Though in great pain from his wound, the heart of Sir Charles was alive to the fear that she might suffer by hearing suddenly what had happened ; he therefore prevailed on Cooper to accompany him to the Parsonage at Brookdale, and resign his commission to Mr. Huntley.

The latter was inexpressibly shocked

at the alarming appearance of the baronet. As soon as he had heard the particulars of the transaction, and had ascertained from the surgeon that care and quiet was all that was necessary to prevent serious consequences, he gladly yielded to the suggestion of Sir Charles, and immediately set off to carry the unfortunate intelligence to Lady Montrevor.

Her ladyship proved on this occasion, as she did on most others which drew forth her character, the strength of her understanding, the sincerity of her piety, and the sensibility of her heart. However guarded Mr. Huntley was in entering upon the subject, her fears and penetration outstripped his words, and she exclaimed, with solemn anguish, grasping the hand of Mr. Huntley,—“Tell me not, my friend, that Sir Charles has fallen by my husband: nor that Montrevor has suffered by a murderer’s hand.”—Mr. Huntley gave Lord Montre-

vor's note, and hastened to remove all apprehensions by relating what had happened.

Lady Montrevor listened with silent attention; and, though she felt joyful for the safety of her husband, it was chastened by the thought of the guilt incurred by the man she still too fondly loved.

“You, my dear sir,” said she, “must instruct and assist me in offering my thanks to that Divine goodness, which has preserved the ill-judging Montrevor from the guilt and horrors that this day threatened him.”

To this sentiment, another arose spontaneously to her mind; and she prayed, with inward fervour, that this signal preservation might be preparatory to that great blessing she had so long and fervently solicited from heaven for her husband,—namely, the grace to see and amend the errors of his life.

If the pious wishes of this excellent

wife were unavailing for the object of her tender solicitude, at least her prayers returned with blessings to her own bosom. After a few moments spent in these meditations, religion, with its train of comforts, entered: its influence was visible; her air and manner became composed, and expressive of virtuous resignation. She repeated her warm acknowledgments for the friendly attentions of Mr. Huntley; who soon left her, to return to his relation with an account of this interview.

Caroline was much shocked at the relation given by Lady Montrevor of the danger to which her father had been exposed. He, however, was safe; and, more confirmed than ever in the hope that, after what had passed, all idea of an alliance with Mr. Fairbank would be wholly relinquished, she readily yielded to the soothing representations of her mother.

But the feelings of Julia were not so

easily to be controlled. Her surprise, sorrow, and repentance, were excessive, on learning the full extent of the mischief she had so unfortunately occasioned. In vain she this time sought comfort, from the absence of all intentional wrong, in her own mind ; positive evil had ensued from her unpardonable levity ; and, though she blamed Lord Carlmaine, she far more rigorously condemned her own indiscretion, as the immediate cause of what had happened ; and she was inconsolable.

Much were these her first real, well founded sufferings, aggravated by the necessity she was under of confining them to her own afflicted heart. To the secrecy that Lord Carlmaine had made her promise, and which he so strongly urged in his note, she determined to adhere, however painful it was to do so : as, while she thought of the consequences of her late imprudence, she shrunk with horror from a disclosure, which could

possibly lead to any thing of a similar nature.

Lord Carlmaine had in the note said, that, though indifferent to every thing that could arise personally to himself, and perfectly ready to defend, if necessary, what he had done, prudence, and consideration of her feelings, had determined him on suffering the matter to die away in silence. He added, that he was well assured of Jessy Thornton's discretion, whom he had seen, and persuaded that she was herself a party in some measure concerned. Julia felt no permanent security in this bond of secrecy ; but she flattered herself, that, if some time were suffered to elapse before Lord Carlmaine was known to be the author of the letters, the affair would not be again taken up.

In this hope she was strengthened, by reflections on the respective characters of the gentlemen, from whose resentment his lordship thought so much was to be



expected. In every point of view, however, Julia saw only for herself silent affliction and self-reproach.

This was a state of suffering wholly new to our late thoughtless heroine ; and the struggle to hide her feelings, which had seldom before needed concealment, brought on a feverish disposition ; consequently, much of her low spirits and evident uneasiness was attributed, by Lady Montrevor and Caroline, to bodily illness ; to which, till now, she had been wholly unaccustomed. Thus, to her great relief, Julia escaped many penetrating observations, that would have considerably embarrassed her. But still the secrecy, which she necessarily imposed on herself, was almost insupportable ; and this, perhaps, is not unfrequently the case with young and uncorrupted minds on similar occasions. Impropriety, and even guilt, may hope to obtain forgiveness, may find relief in the very act of an ingenuous confession ; but

concealment is the expedient of the coward and the villain,—a meanness from which the generosity of virtue shrinks with abhorrence.

What, however, assisted more than all the prescribed remedies or attention of Julia's friends, in restoring both the composure of her mind, and health of her body, was the favourable reports received respecting Sir Charles Benwell. This really estimable young man bore the pain and inconveniences of his present situation with becoming fortitude ; while he felt unaffected gratitude to heaven, that no consequences more fatal had resulted from a proceeding to which he had reluctantly yielded.

By the worthy family at Brookdale Parsonage, their wounded relation had been received with all the kindness his situation needed ; and, in Mrs. Huntley and her daughter, he found most agreeable and attentive nurses. Sir Charles's first concern, after Mr. Huntley's return

from Arlingham, had been to dictate to him two letters : one to Mr. Fairbank,—in which, with manly candour, he apologized for his late conduct ; which he requested might be attributed to the momentary ebullition of anger and agitation, and not to premeditated disrespect. The other was addressed to Lord Montrevor ; and contained the assurance, that his wound was a mere trifle ; and that his chief anxiety arose from the apprehension, that the late occurrence should interrupt the friendship which had subsisted between them. He added, that, having discovered that the wishes he had formed respecting Miss Montrevor were not likely to be successful, he had determined to relinquish them ; and that, as soon as he was able to travel, he should go down to the north, and endeavour to forget his disappointment in the resumption of his usual occupations and amusements.

These letters being dispatched, he seriously set about banishing Caroline from his thoughts; and, as his prospect of success had never kept pace with the love he had encouraged towards her, the task did not seem beyond the combined force of what appeared the present necessity of the case, and the efforts of his reason.

In truth, Nature had not been niggardly in her gifts to Sir Charles Benwell. His understanding, though slow, was solid and discriminating: but habits of reflection, and abstract reasoning, were foreign to his mind; which was chiefly employed upon the occurrences of the day, and derived the little information it possessed from conversation, and the general topics of a mixed society. His heart was warm and sincere. In the common joys and sorrows of those around him he truly sympathized; but he not unfrequently shocked the feelings of his

more refined acquaintance, when he laughed at their fastidious delicacy.

Of the radical cure of hopeless love, in a heart thus framed, the reader will entertain no doubt; and we will therefore leave the progressive amendment, both in body and mind, of the baronet, chiefly to the tender care and sympathy of Mrs. and Miss Huntley.

## CHAPTER IV.

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“ Oh! what a tangled web we weave  
When first we practice to deceive.”

SCOTT.

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FORTUNATELY the improved state of his wife's health enabled Mr. Byngham to hasten, soon after these events, to the support of his beloved sister ; who, yielding to his suggestions, as well as those of her own judgment, consented to remove Caroline, for a time, from a neighbourhood, where she could not avoid being, at this period, an object of peculiar and unpleasant observation. Julia had met Mr. Byngham at his return with the warmth and enthusiasm of her character, drawn forth by a knowledge of his kindness towards her unhappy mother, as well as many parental marks of affection towards herself and Frederick,

with which she had before been unacquainted.

The ingenuousness with which she expressed the feelings of her grateful heart, awakened in the mind of her benefactor tender and painful recollections ; and, unable to give utterance to his sentiments, he could only press her in speechless emotion to his bosom, and then hurried from her. Lady Montrevor had been present on this occasion, and, with affectionate sympathy, lamented the enfeebled state of her brother's nerves and spirits ; requesting Julia would not again distress him by reverting to the death of her mother, for whom he had entertained a particular friendship, and which had occurred nearly at the time when his separation from Mrs. Byngham had destroyed all his own hope of domestic happiness. Julia was much affected, and readily promised never again to hazard wounding the feelings of her best friend.

The weather was now fine, and Lady Montrevor settled with her brother to visit an old friend of their father, resident in Worcestershire, where not only Caroline and Julia would be welcome guests, but where Edward and Frederick might meet them, and spend the Easter vacation. This timely change of scene was highly pleasing to the two friends; and Sir Charles Benwell being pronounced out of danger, the party left Devonshire, and were received with friendly hospitality by Mr. Taverner.

This gentleman, now fast approaching to the verge of life, was in his youth indebted to the late Mr. Byngham for the means of acquiring a very ample fortune, had for many years been linked in close friendship with him in India, and had always felt disposed to continue that regard to the family of his friend.

Narrow circumstances in the outset of life, subsequent active exertions, and lastly, a broken constitution, had pre-



vented his forming any matrimonial engagement; and at this time, the only solace to his hypochondriac mind, and companion of the solitude in which he lived, was the society of an intelligent, respectable woman, who, under the title of housekeeper, was become almost necessary to his existence.

Besides a present large emolument, Mrs. Mellorn was assured her old friend would liberally reward her services by his will; she therefore made it her constant and cheerful study to bear with his irascible temper, and by every means contribute to his comfort, and gratify his wayward humour. And these sacrifices, which hope, rather than gratitude, is generally seen to call forth in the minds of all dependents, were made by Mrs. Mellorn without any very extraordinary efforts of self-command. For the performance of such a task she was particularly well calculated, by constitutional good spirits, a naturally pliant and obliging

disposition, and great goodness of heart. She had taken possession of her post upwards of thirty years before the present period, and had filled it so much to the satisfaction of Mr. Taverner, that he had never regretted those connexions from which much of the pleasures of life are often derived.

Such was the society to which, with very few additions, Caroline and Julia were condemned. By Miss Montrevor it was borne with the tranquil grace and submission that generally marked her character; but to her friend it was occasionally very irksome, and she looked forward with impatience to the arrival of Frederick and Edward.

At length the longed-for moment came, and Julia forgot, in the affectionate embrace of her brother, all the unhappiness she had known since they parted. Lady Montrevor, thinking the subject was in itself most delicate, and safest in her own hands, had, to the relief of Julia, under-

taken to send to Oxford the account of the late transactions in Devonshire. By this communication, Julia had not appeared implicated in the affair; but it was not the least of the punishments her imprudence had entailed, that she had almost hourly to contend with the natural and habitual impulse of her open disposition, to confide to Frederick all its errors and its feelings.

She was well aware, that did he know what he would call her levity of conduct, she must encounter his serious displeasure; but she felt she could much better bear his most poignant rebukes, than this painful concealment. The innate honor and delicacy of her mind told her, however, that the secret, thus ever on the point of escaping, was in great measure not her own; that Lord Carlmaine had relied upon her strictly keeping it, and had no doubt acted in conformity with that reliance. She bitterly lamented the

humiliating entanglement into which she had been inadvertently involved ; and, while assured she should best preserve her own self-esteem by conscientiously fulfilling her promise to Lord Carlmaine, she determined to exercise so careful a guard over her conduct in future, as never to experience similar uneasiness.

From the affectionate note Lady Montrevor had received from her husband, she encouraged both in herself and Caroline the hope that he had relinquished the plan he had formed respecting Mr. Fairbank ; Miss Montrevor's joy, therefore, was almost unmixed, on her meeting with Edward ; and, as he was gratified by the reception she gave him, and really pleased at again seeing her and Julia, his cousin sought not nicely to scrutinize his attentions, but rested happy in the enjoyment of his society.

They now rode, walked, or drove in various directions, over a large extent of

hill and dale, generally spending their mornings without interruption from the visits of the neighbourhood.

Edward was well pleased with this change, not exactly from intense study, but from some of the restraints of College which he could not completely avoid, to the company of two lovely young women; by the undisguised partiality of one of whom his vanity was flattered, and his feelings touched. Towards Julia he often felt most powerfully attracted, and, could he have persuaded himself that he possessed any advocate in her bosom, he would have been as much in love as his phlegmatic nature would permit him to be; but the unconstrained freedom, and invariable good humour, with which she always treated him, bore too strong a resemblance to her behaviour to her brother, for him to think her susceptible of the sentiments with which he sometimes wished to in-

spire her; at others his heart was solely Caroline's.

Thus inexperienced, and destitute of the rudder of sound judgment, solid principles, or a feeling heart, the wavering mind of this young man was constantly fluctuating between the indulgence of one or other selfish gratification, without sufficient sensibility for a steady attachment, and thrown by particular circumstances into a situation calculated to awaken the warmth of youthful passions.

To Frederick, this interruption of the serious pursuits in which he had been diligently engaged, and the intercourse with persons to whom he was most fondly attached, was in the highest degree pleasing. Lady Montrevor he had in infancy regarded as the affectionate mother of Julia and himself; and, since his matured reason had enabled him to observe and appreciate the excellence of

her character, the most unbounded respect and admiration were added to his grateful tenderness. Towards Mr. Byngham he had ever felt the dutiful sentiments that an indulgent parent could command, added to a grateful sense of peculiar obligations. Caroline he loved as a sister ; but it was on Julia that his soul doated, and who had hitherto exclusively engrossed all the anxious tenderness and enthusiasm of his disposition.

He had loved to consider her as a tender plant, requiring his constant care. The same warmth of feeling, which, when quite a boy, made him proud and ready to defend her against all the vexations of contending childhood, now made him wish for the power to shield her from the woes of life, cherish her virtues, and promote her happiness. He often hoped that attractions which appeared to him so great, might early attach some estimable man, with whom her youth would find a protector, and her heart a friend

worthy to fill it. No wonder if, in these pleasing visions, Selwyn stood conspicuous ; but he felt that his anxious desires for Julia's welfare soared too high. She was not, never could be, a match for a man of his fortune and pretensions ; neither could he flatter himself that her character was calculated to suit the unimpassioned and reflecting turn of his friend's mind.

He had frequently watched the behaviour of Selwyn when in Julia's company, but his inexperienced observation could trace only occasional admiration, or partiality naturally excited towards a girl he had known from a child, with now and then marks of disapprobation, sufficiently strong to prove the dissimilarity of their minds. Still, however, his hopes, or rather wishes, almost unconsciously recurred. Julia was certainly lively and thoughtless, perhaps sometimes rather to an excess ; but surely, at her age, this was pardonable, if not desirable ; and if



Selwyn's character was too unbending to admire so much vivacity, others might not think so.

Still, with a view of rendering Julia's manners more agreeable to Selwyn, he had often earnestly endeavoured to restrain the natural bias of her disposition. These endeavours were frequently worse than unsuccessful; for, as they were sometimes made in the presence of Selwyn, Frederick had the mortification to find, that, by the playful inconsiderate way in which they were received, she often wandered still farther from the approbation of the man whom, above all others, he most wished her to please.

At this time, however, he found Julia's vivacity much subdued. Judging by his own feelings, he attributed this alteration to reflections suggested by the circumstances relative to their parents, with which she had become acquainted. But in this conjecture he was mistaken, as the seriousness sometimes apparent in

his sister's manner, was occasioned by the severe check her spirits had lately received, and the constraint to which she was obliged to submit her feelings even towards her brother.

Frederick's mind, on the contrary, was more at ease than it ever before had been with her. He could now converse freely on the extraordinary nature of their situation; and, though he could not share many of the visionary suppositions which Julia, half playful, half in earnest, professed to entertain, yet her lively conjectures tended in some measure to disperse the gloom that had hitherto attended all his secret meditations on the subject. At one time, he would listen with pleased attention to the hopes she cherished, that some event would lead to a discovery of respectable connexions, and establish the reputation of their mother; at another, he involuntarily yielded to the suggestions of this dear philosopher, that it was unwise, ungrateful, useless, to grieve at

things that had occurred before their existence, and which a whole life of anxiety could never remedy.

In addition to the enlivening effects of Julia's conversation, another influence was almost imperceptibly acting upon the mind of Frederick at this period. The anxious, restless meditations, to which he had frequently yielded, had been of late often superseded by thoughts of Emma Dermont, whose image had become dearer to him by absence. On first losing her society, he thought of her with kindness and regret, then with tender anxiety, lest her health should suffer from want of proper air and exercise, not having a companion to share them with her; till at last her idea mingled in seducing unison with all his present feelings and future prospects. No fears of unrequited regard impeded the progress of these newly awakened feelings. "No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast."

Emma, he was assured, loved him with all the artless tenderness of which her extreme youth was capable ; and he looked forward with a well-grounded hope of attaching a heart well worthy his pursuit. Love, now in its infancy, presented to him none but the happiest prospects. Roses, ever fresh and blooming, bestrewed his path ; and pleasures, in ceaseless sweet variety, where Emma was ever the presiding deity, rose in succession to his fancy. The cares of the world, his peculiar situation, once the object of his fears, and the theme of mournful anticipation, were for a time banished from his remembrance ; and no change, no coldness, no alloy, was contemplated in the pleasures, which the smiling, the yielding future presented to him.

Mr. Dermont loved, esteemed him, and was not a man with whom the adventitious advantage of birth or fortune would weigh in competition with his

daughter's happiness. Thus confident in hope, Frederick sought not, wished not, to arm himself against a passion, in the indulgence of which he already felt a soothing charm, which seemed to speak a new power of enjoyment in his mind. The affection he had ever felt for Julia was undiminished : she would never be less dear to him, and he could not love her more ; but the sentiment with which Emma filled his heart, was of a powerful, increasing, innovating quality, that he even now felt was destined to give the colour to his fate.

As men advance in life, they are generally so far from being shy in acknowledging the power of beauty, that they often fancy and profess themselves to be in love ; but this is rarely seen in youth, when unpractised nature can scarcely express its emotion. To a first passion is almost invariably attached a jealous secrecy, an innate refinement, that, in the absence of the beloved object, shuts up

the heart in a species of solitary enjoyment, which would suffer great diminution by being confided to others.

Thus did our hero nourish in secret the remembrance of Emma ; and, though he sought or availed himself of every opportunity to make her the subject of discourse between Julia and himself, he kept so careful a guard over his feelings, that no word or look ever escaped him that could betray his inward sentiments. Julia, therefore, who saw not the workings of the secret spring in her brother's mind, was delighted with what she called the wonderful improvement, which his short residence at Oxford had wrought in his spirits ; and, believing his heart, like her own, free to choose its partner, often amused herself with describing the wife that would suit him.

“ She shall neither be like, my dear Frederick,” she used to say, “ Caroline nor me, but between both—that is, neither too serious nor too gay. Then she

shall have Emma Dermont's melting blue eyes, with Lady Maria Carlmaine's dignified carriage and fascinating manner of speaking, which you admire so much when she condescends to unbend : and, as to her mind, she shall be absolutely a young Lady Montrevor, and then you will have nothing to wish for." Frederick thanked her for the pains she had taken in drawing a picture, which would indeed surpass his hopes, very far exceed his merits, and he feared his good fortune. Julia told him not to be too humble, or he would never succeed, and said she should begin to be on the look-out for this *rara-avis*.

The time now arrived for the breaking up of this family circle, and the two young men returned to College—Frederick to prosecute his studies, and Edward the pleasures that had engaged his attention before he quitted Oxford, and lose the regret he felt at leaving Caroline and Julia, who had by turns excited his

luke-warm affection, and filled his vacant hours. Though Julia felt very painfully this second separation from her brother, she bore it with more composure than before, and even in her adieus anticipated the happiness of their re-union ; while Frederick suffered not this opportunity to escape, of renewing the affectionate advice he was in the habit of giving, for the conduct and happiness of a sister who was so dear to him.

He had frequently since he left Devonshire corresponded with Selwyn, whose letters were expressive of great friendship, but never mentioned Julia in terms that could possibly convey any idea of the increasing interest he felt in all she said and did. Frederick now made Julia the bearer of a letter to him, and took this opportunity to dilate with pleasure on the excellent character of Adolphus Selwyn.

She readily admitted the justice of the panegyric, adding with native penetra-



tion, " I suspect, Frederick, that you would willingly repay my great foresight and care in thinking of a wife for you, by procuring this identical husband for me ; but it will not do—the North and South Poles are not more distant than we two. I think he even *dislikes* me ; and I do believe I should return the compliment, could I think I should one day owe obedience to so harsh-judging cynical a lord. No, no, Frederick, look round again ; this wise plan of yours will never do." " I wish to God it would," he returned seriously. Julia only laughed at his gravity, and bid him take courage, and not despair of getting her off his hands some day or other.

Immediately after the departure of Edward and Frederick, Mr. Byngham left Worcestershire, intending to spend a few days at Bath ere he returned home ; but before he took leave of his respected friend, much conversation passed be-

tween them relative to Lady Montrevor, to whom Mr. Taverner was particularly partial. In describing to the latter the embarrassed state of Lord Montrevor's affairs, Byngham did not seek to conceal his blameable conduct, or the affectionate prudence with which his wife had for many years borne his neglect and irregularities.

During these discussions, Mr. Byngham was preserved by the disinterestedness of his character, as well as affection for his sister, from every selfish wish to seek his own advantage, in the confidence shown by Mr. Taverner, and the communications relative to his property. The old gentleman did not acquaint him with the exact distribution he intended to make of his wealth ; but he imparted sufficient to convince Mr. Byngham that his intentions were favourable to Lady Montrevor ; and, rejoicing at the prospect of affluence for his sister and niece, he

quitted them with inward satisfaction. Lady Montrevor remained a short time longer with Mr. Taverner, and then returned with her daughter and Julia to Devonshire. They found Sir Charles Benwell perfectly recovered ; and, as Lord Montrevor's continued silence confirmed his wife's hopes that he had relinquished his views respecting Mr. Fairbank, she was relieved from much of her late anxiety.

## CHAPTER V.

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“ Inconstant man, that loved all he saw,  
And lusted after all that he did love,  
Ne would his looser life be tied to law :  
But joy'd weak woman's heart to tempt and prove.”  
SPENSER.

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JULIA had the satisfaction, on returning to Arlingham, to find that the regiment of which Lord Carlmaine was colonel had been ordered to Ireland; and that he had joined it a few days before. This was an unspeakable relief to her mind; as the thought of meeting him, after what had passed, was peculiarly disagreeable to her. She felt considerable self-reproach for the giddy imprudence which had associated her with his lordship in a very blameable transaction; and, when she anticipated the humiliation she should experience the first time

she saw him, she almost wished they might never meet again.

Selwyn was still an inmate in the family of Lord Ashmore; who, having been lately afflicted with the gout, was happy in retaining near him his nephew, who was so capable and willing to amuse the tedious hours of confinement. This excellent young man had spent much of the time, since he last saw Julia, in endeavours either to banish her from his thoughts, or in a determination to think of her only as his friend's sister. At times, however, the influence of his passion predominated; and he dwelt on the means of obtaining Julia's affection, and enjoyed in idea the happiness of successful love. But here, unfortunately, late events and stubborn circumstances interrupted his agreeable visions.

He had surprised the object of his solicitude in private conversation with Lord Carlmaine; he had seen the delivery of the note by the latter, and had

remarked Julia's great confusion, when she perceived she was observed. If Selwyn had before partially concealed from himself the precise nature of the sentiments with which she had inspired him, his feelings at this moment fully discovered them to him. Indignation, jealousy, love, surprise, and apprehension, combined to agitate him.

Lord Carlmaine had rode away without appearing to see him ; and Selwyn's first impulse was to follow Julia, disclose to her the character of the man she admitted to such unusual intimacy, and alarm her with a sense of the danger it threatened to her reputation. But, while his anxious wish for an *eclaircissement* combated the fears of offending her, she had regained the house. His next resolution was to inform his cousin that he had seen what had passed between him and Miss Lawrence, and call upon him to explain his intentions. While hastening home with this view, the confused

state of his ideas, and agitation of his feelings, spoke most forcibly how great, in spite of his reason, was Julia's empire over his mind.

Fortunately for the secret he still determined to keep, Carlmaine had not reached home when he arrived ; and thus he had time to regain that composure, which he had seldom so completely lost. He resolutely called to his recollection all his long cherished principles and opinions relative to women in general, and more particularly to the individual with whom he would entrust the power of constituting the happiness or misery of his life ; for to him he felt the married state would possess no medium. Almost every observation he had made on the character of Julia seemed loudly to militate against all unison in such opinions ; and convinced him, that to encourage this growing affection, so destitute of the approval of his reason, would be to prepare for himself disappointment, vexa-

tion, and repentance. Early accustomed to exercise a virtuous and rational dominion over his passions and inclinations, he experienced a well-founded confidence in being able to subdue this misplaced preference. But, while he resolved to conquer every too tender sentiment for Julia, like a true lover, and with all the inconsistency of the passion he compromised with his feelings, he would still, he thought, for her loved sake, as well as from friendship for Frederick, watch over her happiness with the pure regard of a brother ; and jealously scrutinize the conduct and intentions of his relation,—of whom he had begun to entertain the most unfavourable suspicions.

By the time Lord Carlmaine and Selwyn met, the latter had reduced so well his feelings, at least for the present, under the control of his judgment, that he was able to enter on the subject with the composure necessary, to prevent his cousin from forming the slightest suspicion



of the particular interest he took in the object of his inquiries.

Lord Carlmaine heard, with momentary embarrassment, that Selwyn had been witness to his meeting with Julia ; but he was too great an adept in dissimulation not instantly to recover his presence of mind. When, therefore, his cousin seriously reminded him, that Miss Lawrence was not a woman to be trifled with, and, with the authority he had frequently assumed, asked what could be the subject of the note he had given to Julia, he answered, with great self-possession,—“Faith, Adolphus, you are as categorical as any old Romish confessor. However, I will this once be open and sincere with you, that you may not fancy some terrible misfortune is going to happen to your friend’s lively sister. And since, as Julia would never suit you, I cannot fear you as a rival, I will confess I half love the sweet girl : mind me, only *half* ; for at present I can coolly

weigh all the pros and cons in the business; and which will predominate, I know not yet. When I do, I will tell you, and claim your good offices with my father, should this folly of mine increase. In the mean time, I must insist upon your keeping faithfully the secret, which you have thus extorted from me; as I may probably change my mind,—which, (he significantly added,) you know, coz, I have occasionally done before.”

“And does Julia share your sentiments?” said Selwyn, with suppressed emotion.

“*That* I am yet to learn;” he answered, with affected negligence: “nor am I at all impatient on that head, till I have made up my own mind; certain that she, and all who interest themselves for her, will be devilish glad to meet my wishes.”

“And the note?”

“Oh! it was nothing but some verses she had asked me to copy for her.”

“And she does not know your sentiments towards her?” rejoined Selwyn.

“Not from any thing I have said to her: but you know, Adolphus, or I can tell you, that young ladies are never backward at these discoveries; and, I have sometimes had reason to flatter myself, she suspects my inclination. Thus, I think I have fully explained myself, and have only to remind you to be silent as the grave on this business; for, as I vow I know not myself how it will end, (though, probably, in nothing at all,) and you must be aware that it would not be very pleasant to have the girl, with her brother, and the whole crew of protectors and protectresses, looking for an offer, when the wind has shifted to another quarter. Besides, I am unexpectedly ordered from home.”

“Take care, Carlmaine,” said Selwyn, that, in playing a safe game for yourself, you do not endanger the tranquillity of Julia Lawrence. You are right, she

would not suit *me*; but I have known her from infancy, and Frederick I regard as a brother. The happiness of his sister will ever be dear to me; and though, from every prudent consideration, as well as at your request, I shall not mention what you have told me, do not imagine that I will stand by in silence, and see you win the affections of this young creature, with no other view than your temporary amusement. That you will ever marry her, I am much inclined to doubt; and a pursuit of another nature you dare not attempt."

"Oh! heaven forbid," exclaimed Lord Carlmaine, with mock gravity; "how came my sober cousin to think of such naughty things? No, no: be under no uneasiness; I will not run the risk of measuring swords with you,—who would, I see, stand forth as Julia's platonic champion. Trust me, I do not intend to commit myself. I mean to do all I can to get cured of my wound: if I suc-

ceed, so much the better ; if not, the worst that can happen is matrimony with a very charming girl."

As Lord Carlmaine proceeded in this conversation, he became more elated and satisfied with the execution of a plan, which he had meditated after parting with Julia, and catching a glimpse of Selwyn as he rode away. He had before remarked his observing looks directed towards himself and Julia ; and had begun to fear the penetration and rigid principles of his relation ; he was, therefore, not quite taken by surprise in his late examination. He had certainly an esteem for Selwyn ; which, though not strong enough to excite imitation, was a sufficient motive to wish to avoid his censure.

Lord Carlmaine's passion for Julia had daily increased since he first beheld her, and he began almost seriously to think she must be his at *any* price. His pursuits of this nature had generally been

directed against women to whom vice was familiar ; or those whose lax principles, and already debauched imaginations, rendered them the easy prey of open, unblushing attacks, or the more refined insinuating approaches of premeditated seduction. With the character which was at this time the object of his licentious views, he was quite a stranger. A girl more lovely than his fancy had ever painted woman, betraying, in her glowing, animated features, and every graceful attitude of the finest forms, a soul, feelingly alive to the warmest, most touching sensibility ; and yet surrounded and protected by the charms of spotless, perfect innocence, was indeed to him a being of quite a new species. No wonder, then, that he refused belief in the virtuous purity that he could not understand ; though even he, at times, was forced to feel its influence, and made to shrink from his meditated purpose.

Such were, however, but momentary

feelings ; and, in the playful vivacity and buoyant spirits of Julia, he more frequently found cause to rally his guilty courage, and to fan his hope, that, could he succeed in lighting up the torch of love in a heart so warm, and yet so light, it would blaze unusually high. Observation had convinced him, that no one else had been before him in awakening such a sensation in the bosom of Julia.

Of Selwyn he had no fears. He had watched them, but the truth lay hidden from his superficial examination ; and he could discover only marks of disapprobation on one side, and a disposition to ridicule on the other. Edward he sometimes suspected of loving her ; but, from the little warmth and great selfishness of his character, he saw no danger ; especially as Julia evidently considered him as the future husband of Miss Montrevor. From these circumstances, and the favourable manner she received his own advances, Carlmaine hoped that he

should ultimately succeed in touching her heart.

Time and considerable caution, he was aware, would be necessary: but then his reward would be great; and the features of novelty that distinguished this enterprise from all of a similar kind, in which he had been engaged, occupied his mind most agreeably. In the mean time, he felt the necessity of concealing his real designs, especially from the suspicious penetration of Selwyn. Finding, then, that his late short interview with Julia had been observed by him, he concluded it best to admit his cousin to a half confidence; and secure his silence, perhaps approbation, respecting attentions so much above what his friend Lawrence could ever have expected for his sister.

In this communication his lordship artfully took care not to commit himself, by speaking *positively* of those intentions; a precaution which, while it wore the ap-



pearance of confidence, would, he knew, with so prudent a character as that of Selwyn, doubly ensure his silence; as he would never give weight or currency to expectations he had such good reason to believe uncertain. Having thus put his intended operations in train, and conceiving sanguine hopes of success, from the facility with which he had entangled Julia in a kind of scrape, that established a degree of confidence, as well as dependence, on him; he determined not to precipitate measures, but to proceed by gradual means. With deliberate care, and a selfish heart, he determined to defer the execution of his licentious projects till his return from Ireland.

The hasty decision and rapidity with which Lord Carlmaine always delivered his sentiments and opinions, combined with the yet unsettled nature of Selwyn's feelings, had, during the above conversation, so completely overpowered the latter, that it was not till left alone that

he became sensible how ill qualified he was to receive the confidence just reposed in him. His nature shrunk from the silent appearance of duplicity into which he had involuntarily been drawn ; and he condemned the want of presence of mind and collectedness that had prevented his immediate refusing the confidence of Lord Carlmaine. At one time he could not believe that his cousin would seriously wish to form an alliance so very disproportionate to his rank, and contrary to his professed matrimonial views : but the perturbation of his own heart convinced him of the power of Julia's charms, and led him to fear Lord Carlmaine might be induced to make any sacrifice to obtain so great a prize.

Long did he reflect on every word that had fallen from Carlmaine ; many of which he could not reconcile with his own feelings. It was clear that Julia had made a considerable impression on his relation ; and, if it became sufficiently

serious for him to offer himself, he could not believe he would be rejected.

Though Selwyn had repeatedly, and even less than an hour before, determined to conquer his own partiality for her, the thought that she would probably bestow on another that heart he had often pronounced unworthy of his love, filled him with anguish. In vain his reason pointed out all the unfavourable parts of her character; in vain reminded him of his own disposition to exact so much more than the ordinary portion of virtues to be found in women; and suggested how infinitely better suited she was to his relation: he suffered as much as if he had lost in Julia a positive blessing, which he had long contemplated, and cherished as his own. Selwyn, however, could not long permit the turbulence of passion wholly to drown the voice of reason, by which he had studied to govern all his thoughts and actions. He considered that, having unwarily obtained possession

of his cousin's secret, every proper principle forbid him to suffer his own wavering sentiments to interfere with his views, provided those views were strictly honourable and agreeable to Julia.

By degrees he forced himself to think of her as the wife of Carlmaine, blessing him with her love, and, by her playful sweetness and uniform vivacity, winning him from a life of libertinism to domestic enjoyment. But should she discover that, to the passionate lover, had succeeded a husband, whose former habits had incapacitated him for the office of friend, companion, or guide, what—oh! what—would become of her peace, her happiness; nay, more, of her virtue? It might not yet be too late: she had not openly declared herself in favour of Carlmaine; perhaps she was yet ignorant of her conquest; and thought of him only as an agreeable companion. If she rejected his love, (so rapid had been the progress of feelings excited by the idea of her

being irrevocably lost to him,) he would dare every thing to obtain a return to a passion, which now suddenly burnt the fiercer for the restraints and impediments of which he himself had been the first instrument. Chilled by cold considerations, and awed by fears which he now thought well adapted to women in general, but misplaced when applied to Julia Lawrence, he had never sought her love; but, if he could discover that her heart was free, he would leave no effort untried to make it his own. Thus, alternately,—as early prejudices and reason swayed his mind, or the influence of a rapidly increasing affection,—did Selwyn propose successively to retain for Julia only the solicitude of friendship, or resolve to gain, if possible, her love, by every means that honour towards his cousin would permit.

Much did he now blame his ill-judged application to Lord Carlmaine; which had produced a confidence that must fetter

the prosecution of his wishes. Then, again, he reflected that the path of honor—from which not love for Julia should tempt him to swerve,—was broad and evident. His first object should be to discover the state of Julia's sentiments for his cousin, which, he thought, he should easily be able to do, from the open, artless expression of her countenance, on hearing him spoken of; and, if it appeared that her heart was favourably disposed towards him, and that Lord Carlmaine would actually give up his ambitious views, and raise her to his rank, he would forego his own wishes, and carry his regret to a distant clime.

In the mean time, he resolved to bury his secret deep from every eye, and more particularly from that of his rival. Those only who know a lover's fears—a lover's caprice, will acquit us of inconsistency in the above description of Selwyn's state of mind. But what better result than weakness or irresolution could be

expected from the struggles of a young impassioned philosopher ; who professed to pay respect and obedience to his reason, when his eye was fascinated, his judgment confused and prejudiced.

Such were his feelings, and such his ineffectual conflict, when he learnt that the family of Arlingham was returned ; and, with a beating heart, he hastened to pay his respects to Lady Montrevor. He was shewn into a room, where, he was told, her ladyship would wait upon him, as soon as she had dismissed the steward, who was with her upon business. He had just begun to pace the room, and look into his thoughts, when the object of them entered from a small flower-garden, into which one of the doors opened. She advanced, gaily singing, into the middle of the room, unconscious that any one was there ; and, swinging her hat carelessly in one hand, with the other she tossed back the natural ringlets that, in dark but bright profu-

sion, shaded a forehead of matchless form, and dazzling whiteness. In her cheeks the glow of youth and health mantled in the brightest tints, while her parted lips added beauty to her mouth ; from which she sent forth sounds that struck the ravished ears of Selwyn, and vibrated to the deepest recesses of his heart.

She was much confused at first perceiving him ; but soon the sudden blush subsided, and, with the bewitching easy grace that marked every action in which her unsophisticated heart shared, she offered her hand, and declared her surprise and pleasure at the meeting. As soon as she saw him, all the high encomiums her brother had bestowed on him rose to her memory ; and, as that moment the whole soul of Selwyn had flown to his eyes, and was drinking in large draughts of love and admiration, his countenance shone with unusual animation, and every feature expressed such



manly intelligence, softened by so much sensibility, that he appeared to Julia almost handsome.

Selwyn had gently taken her extended hand ; which, in the present delightful ecstasy of his feelings, he scarcely dared trust himself to touch, lest he should imprudently betray his emotion. Julia now recollected her brother's letter ; and wholly unconscious of the cause of the agitation she could not but notice, she said, laughing,—“Why, Mr. Selwyn, you are grown quite nervous: I, also, was at first startled by finding you here, when I thought no one was in the room ; but I see you cannot forget my heedless intrusion. However, I will now fetch you a letter from Frederick, as an atonement.”

She then ran out of the room, leaving Selwyn more than ever charmed with the beauty of her person, and fascinated by her unaffected manners ; but much provoked at the little command he had pos-

sessed over his feelings. Alarmed at the rapid growth of a sentiment which might occasion the unhappiness of his life, he resolved, the moment she returned, he would attempt to learn his fate. He would talk so long and so pointedly of Lord Carlmaine ; and he would, by his fixed attention to every turn of her countenance, so probe her guileless heart, that the discovery of its most secret feelings, as they related to him, should be easy : and thus, before he advanced farther on this ocean of mingled delight and apprehension, he would make sure of compass and helm.

Greatly sobered by this prudent determination, he awaited Julia's return ; hoping she would be alone, that he might, unobserved and uninterrupted, enjoy the pleasure of gazing upon her, and penetrating her sentiments. Julia did re-enter alone ; and, giving him the letter, would instantly have withdrawn, but, with tolerably well-affected ease, Selwyn

requested she would stay, and give him some information about his friend ; which, he doubted, he should not find in his letter.

“ True ! ” said Julia, good-humouredly seating herself. “ For instance ; I dare say Fred will not tell you, that, his hair being perfectly grown, the ugly wig is discarded ; and he looks better than ever. I thought, too, he was grown : but I would not say so ; for you know, Adolphus,—I beg your pardon ;—for you know, Mr. Selwyn, he might not like to be reminded that he is still of a growing age, in spite of all the good sense and information every body allows he possesses. Indeed he is, I assure you, much improved ; though,” she continued, looking somewhat archly, “ *you*, perhaps, would not think so : but he seems much more lively and happy than when he left Devonshire.

Thus she went on indulging her affectionate heart in speaking of this much-

loved brother ; a subject that her charmed auditor gladly prolonged, convinced that none he could substitute would call forth such energy, or render his conversation half so acceptable. Julia indeed experienced, on this occasion, a very pure and high gratification ; although she did not bestow a thought upon the source from whence it flowed : for to hear or speak the praises of those we love, and to dwell with pleasure upon the recital, is a privilege peculiar to the benevolent and the virtuous ; the selfish and worldly-minded know it not.

Selwyn had not resolution to break the happy strain, by introducing the topic he meditated : besides, as he gazed, listened, admired with new delight, he endeavoured to persuade himself, that, in the presence of a third person, he should find more courage to pursue the desired scrutiny, and conceal the expression of his disappointment or satisfaction. Forgetting, then, Carlmaine—and all his late

resolutions, he continued to enjoy the intoxicating pleasure the present moments afforded; and Julia, unusually pleased with his society, attempted no longer to withdraw.

Lady Montrevor at length entered with Caroline; and, while she regretted the business that had so long detained her, expressed her pleasure that he had not been quite alone. Miss Montrevor looked with rather an expression of inquisitive surprise at Julia; who, as unconscious of implied, as of all intentional, impropriety, answered the look by saying—"Yes, after mutually startling each other by our unexpected entrance, we have been chatting so agreeably of our absent friends, that I forgot to come and tell you, my dear, that the gardener is waiting to take your orders about the hyacinths,—and that Mr. Selwyn has not yet opened Frederick's letter!"—Selwyn coloured; but he was favourably situated, and it was not observed.

The conversation then naturally turned upon their neighbours: and Selwyn, knowing that Miss Montrevor had never encouraged the pretensions of Sir Charles Benwell, conceived there could be no breach of delicacy in retailing a piece of news, which was currently believed in the neighbourhood; namely, that while Miss Huntley was humanely assisting to heal the wound in the baronet's shoulder, she had inflicted a more serious one in his heart.

The ladies all expressed great pleasure at this intelligence; as they had private reasons for suspecting, that their good friend Fanny Huntley had for some time entertained a secret preference for Sir Charles; and Lady Montrevor declared she did not know two people more calculated to contribute to each other's happiness. Selwyn also informed them that Sir Charles was quite recovered, and gone into Yorkshire, to make arrangements preparatory to his marriage.

Julia, who had always really loved Miss Huntley, after the first moment of sympathy in the prospect of her friend's happiness, felt a tear start to her eyes, as she said—"I hope I shall not be selfish enough to regret a circumstance so advantageous to our dear Fanny; though we must lose her."

Selwyn read the expression of her feelings; and, happy in possessing the power of relieving them, hastened to tell her that the old people, according to report, had obtained a promise from the baronet, that, as long as they lived, he and their daughter should spend a considerable portion of the year with them.

The smile of grateful pleasure, with which Julia repaid his speech, incapacitated him still more for the fiery ordeal which yet incessantly rose to his mind, from which, indeed, he not only shrunk with unconquerable timidity himself, but now even trembled lest some one, by mentioning his cousin, should put to

flight the joy and hope that fluttered at his heart. He had been much alarmed when Lady Montrevor asked after the family at Brookdale; but for that time he escaped, and did not venture to look at Julia.

To avert this evil, he studiously exerted himself—and so successfully,—to prevent any pause in the conversation that might lead to the dreaded subject, that he was on the point of taking leave, happy in avoiding the *eclaircissement*, on which he had been so resolutely bent when he entered the house. He had already risen, and taken his hat, when Lady Montrevor exclaimed,—“Oh! Mr. Selwyn, I am quite ashamed that my thoughts should have been so engrossed by the good news you bring us, that, till this moment, I have omitted my inquiries after your cousin. Lord Carlmaine is, I understand, in Ireland; and I hope he is quite well.”

“Quite so, madam;” he answered, with



as much steadiness of voice as he could command. Then, turning his eyes (with an effort of desperate resolution,) on our poor heroine, he beheld her face covered with the deepest suffusion ; while, in corresponding agitation, she sought to conceal her confusion by bending over a vase of flowers that stood on the table. Selwyn, nearly convulsed by the revolutionary emotions that crowded on his mind, paid his compliments in a hurried voice, and hastened away ; leaving Lady Montrevor surprised at the abruptness and singularity of his manner, which, after a moment's reflection, she attributed to some unpleasant circumstance concerning his relation ; whose conduct, she knew, frequently excited the disapprobation of his family.

## CHAPTER VI.

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“ Self murder ! name it not, our Island's shame !  
That makes her the reproach of foreign states ;  
Shall nature, swerving from her earliest dictate—  
Self-preservation, fall by her own act ?  
Forbid it Heaven !

B. BLAIR.

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LORD MONTREVOR had for many years maintained a very expensive establishment in town for Vittoria : that abandoned woman ! whose attractions had first seduced his youthful heart from the paths of honor and rectitude, to those of guilty pleasures ; and whose licentious love, and subsequent artful conduct, had ultimately obtained a complete ascendancy over his heart and character, by constantly ministering to the indulgence of his irregular passions. In the renewal of his acquaintance with her many

years after his marriage, those passions had been surprised, and his heart, by degrees, yielded its tenderness, in return for the warmest expressions of attachment.

The disposition of Lord Montrevor, in early youth, had been good, and naturally formed for virtue. His mind was quick, though not strong; averse to labour and investigation, but capable of obtaining a considerable degree of useful knowledge, though too often inclined to rest contented with superficial acquirements. These qualities are not certainly the characteristics of superiority; but, being competent to appreciate the motives, ends, and importance of human duties, would have led, in Lord Montrevor, to personal respectability, and practical usefulness of conduct; had they not been associated with an habitual fickleness of disposition, which had a malignant influence upon all his purposes, rendered his virtue imperfect, and defeated his

most rational plans of happiness. The misfortunes of his friends awakened his sympathy ; but his benevolence was a passing sun-beam, bright, but neither warm, nor lasting. The even temper, and pleasing accomplishments, of Lady Montrevor, gradually lost their power of increasing his happiness : his severest judgment could not see a fault, or impropriety ; but time had produced in him its usual effects,—indifference had succeeded to love ; and his excellent wife had the mortification to discover, that with the most exemplary conduct, with a constant endeavour to please, she was still the victim of his incurable inconstancy. This quality poisoned the spring of all his actions ; drove him from one amusement to another, exhausting their power to please in an endless chace after variety. No vicious motives impelled him, and often even no guilty pleasures seduced him ; but his mind was unguarded, and, following the guidance of his passions, he

quickly experienced the galling slavery of vice and sensuality in the painful sensations of fruitless remorse and ineffectual struggles. He often felt melancholy and wretched : but having neither virtue nor firmness of purpose to persevere in a plan of reformation, he sought to divert his mind, and to lighten his cares, by the usual expedient of seeking a variety of amusements, and principally that of gaming.

It is painful to dwell on the habits and character of a professed gamester : we will not, therefore, attempt to detail the feverish, and anxious state of his mind ; the quick, and alternate succession of his hopes and fears. It is sufficient to observe, that Lord Montrevor, in his fortune, was almost ruined ; in his peace of mind, completely so. Lady Montrêvor was also deeply wounded, but her affliction did not produce any unkind reproaches against the author of her complicated distress ; and seemed intended to

call forth those sublime virtues of patient endurance and pious resignation.

The fervour of his guilty passion for Vittoria did not last long; but the wily Italian knew well how to substitute chains as durable, and little less agreeable.— Within her doors, pleasure, in varying garbs, for ever reigned. There Montrevor might drink as deeply as he chose from the Circean goblet, no one would notice, or be shocked at the debasing metamorphosis; no *monitory* of virtue stayed his hand, or sought to uphold his slippery footsteps: as far removed from the influence of the mild reproving eye of his neglected wife, as good from ill,— all around him seemed to breathe but to promote his enjoyments; till at length he became the slave, where he, at first, commanded.

Whenever Vittoria appeared, the smiles and well affected transport of a still lively affection danced before her; while pleasure followed in her train. With her,

and her associates, therefore, only, did he find himself at ease ; and on her alone he had learnt to depend for the charm that was to silence the gnawing worm within ; for the means that were to rid him agreeably of those hours, which reflection, in spite of all his efforts, would, but for her, have rendered quite insupportable.

Thus duped by his own wilful blindness, and by the consummate art of Vittoria, the grand climax rapidly approached. Surrounded on all sides by clamorous creditors, his ruin was inevitable. The money he received from Fairbank was immediately transmitted to Vittoria to pay gambling debts of considerable amount ; and by the sale of some timber (the last he could ever hope to cut down, so closely had the property now been stripped,) he was enabled to carry with him to Town another large sum. This his Italian friend also received, to silence, in part, the most importunate creditors.

In a few weeks he would receive the rents of his estates, which he had this time peremptorily insisted should be sent him, without the smallest deduction. In vain the worthy old steward remonstrated, with prophetic sighs dwelt on his diminished sources, and kindly glanced at the fatal end of such disproportioned expences.

Deaf to every reasonable representation, Montrevor persisted in saying that he wanted the money for a particular purpose, and would send down what was required for the necessary expenditures.

Vittoria welcomed him with more than her usual pleasure ; and Montrevor, as if to make himself amends for his late vexation, or with a prophetic feeling that the close of his mad career was not far distant, entered with renewed energy and desperation into every excess of riot and dissipation. He played high, but he was fortunate ; he had still many debts, but those denominated “ debts of honour”



were cancelled; and, thanks to the judicious arrangements of Vittoria, and the faithful Filippo, his creditors did not seem disposed to disturb him for the present. In this ominous calm, and in the midst of guilty enjoyments, the infatuated Montrevor spent the time till the arrival of the expected supply from Arlingham. He marked not the trembling eagerness with which Vittoria received the valuable packet, which he gave her in the presence of Filippo, saying,—“Employ it as you will, my angel, only do not suffer care or thought to approach me. While I live, I should like to know or hear of nothing but love and Vittoria.” The latter and his Lordship had this day, contrary to their usual custom, dined tête-a-tête; and she had so successfully plied him with liquors of an intoxicating quality, that, soon after the arrival of the packet, it was necessary he should be put to bed.

From this state of stupefaction he was not roused till late the next day, by a

maid-servant ; who, knocking loudly at the door, requested admittance to deliver a letter, with which a servant had been waiting several hours, having had orders not to leave the house without an answer. Lord Montrevor, little refreshed by his unnatural sleep, admitted the servant, who retired after giving the letter. It was some time before he was sufficiently awake to comprehend what he read, which was as follows :—

“ Your dishonourable conduct, in putting me off so repeatedly, with shuffling excuses, has exhausted my patience ; and unless the four thousand pounds you owe me are paid within twenty-four hours, I shall, at the expiration of that time, put your bond into the hands of my solicitor, with orders to proceed against you immediately.                   GEORGE MACKLAREN.”

Lord Montrevor arose, bathed his aching temples with cold water, and then again perused the note. Its contents were so unexpected, and his senses still so

confused, that he looked repeatedly round the room to ascertain that he was not still dreaming, when his eyes fell on another letter that lay unopened on his dressing-table. He eagerly tore open the seal, and read these words :—

“ My Lord,—Again you have forfeited your word, and another month is gone by without my receiving the two thousand three hundred pounds I won of you six months ago. You are no longer entitled to the consideration of a gentleman ; and, unless you send the money before Monday next, I will take care that the world shall learn, at every coffee-house in town, your dishonorable character, that you may not have it in your power to swindle others as you have done— W. HENLY.”

Lord Montrevor's senses were now perfectly clear, and he furiously rang the bell ; then, throwing open the door, vehemently called alternately for Vittoria and Filippo ; instead of whom the maid-servant again appeared. He stared at

her with anger and astonishment ; and, roughly seizing her arm, asked her where her mistress was ; then loudly ordered her to send Filippo to him, if he was not gone to the devil. The woman now stared in her turn ; and, thinking her master was beside himself, she humbly answered, she would go and see, and hastily quitted the room.

Montrevor's impatience increasing, he went to Vittoria's apartment, and, bursting open the door, was struck with the dismantled appearance and confusion that reigned, in a place which had been the repository of the most costly and luxurious profusion. He threw himself, gasping for breath, on a sofa,—the next moment, starting up, he ran with frenzied velocity through the apartments. Several workmen were employed, some detaching the splendid mirrors from the walls, others packing up the brilliant lustres.

Suddenly the idea struck him that an execution was in the house, and that

Vittoria had quitted it in alarm, and taken Filippo with her. A moment's cool reflection would have annihilated this belief; but the unfortunate, guilty Montrevor, was any thing but cool; and his mind, amid the terrible suspicions that racked it, gladly rested on one less horrible than the rest. Sick at heart, from what he had already seen, and anxious to avoid beholding more, he was hastening back to his apartment, when he heard a loud voice below, declaring he would not leave the house without an answer for Colonel Macklaren. Montrevor sternly vociferated from the top of the stairs, "Fellow, begone, and tell your master he shall be paid to-morrow."—He then entered the room, and, on ringing the bell, it was answered by the same woman, who now waited for her orders without the door. Her master, perceiving that his former violence had alarmed her, asked, in a softened voice, where all the men were, that he could

get no one near him but herself.—“Why, dear, my Lord,” she returned, “my Lady and Mr. Filippo sent them all away last night; saying, that your lordship was going to another house, and, as this was to be given up immediately, they must be upon their own hands for a few days, after which you would take them all back again.”

“And where are your mistress and Filippo?”

“Lauk, and what does your lordship not know that they went off last night, soon after your lordship was carried to bed, telling the boy and me that you would follow them to-day?”

“Gone! Confusion overtake them;” exclaimed Lord Montrevor, suddenly starting up, and stamping violently on the ground. Then seeming to recollect himself, he struck his forehead with his clenched fist, sunk again into a chair, and, with desperate composure, commanded the attendant to go on, and

communicate all she knew respecting the proceedings of Vittoria and Filippo.

Though this woman's information was sufficient to convince the wretched Montrevor of the perfidy of his mistress and her servant, it could not comprise some necessary particulars, which we will supply.

The artful Filippo had long since passed the boundaries that had retained him in the capacity of a servant; and Vittoria, without reflecting that the wicked may have confederates, but can never possess friends, had about the same time discovered that the love she had really felt for Lord Montrevor was fast wearing out. Her confidant also perceived this; and having adroitly, by the aid of a comely person and much presumption, contrived to succeed to the favour of his mistress, they agreed to join forces, continue the farce, and live and enjoy themselves at his lordship's expense as long as it was convenient, or till he was wholly

ruined ; when they would return to their own country, with the fruits of their infamous devices.

In contemplation of this event, as Lord Montrevor's embarrassments began to multiply, Vittoria sought by every means to possess herself of all the money he could command at different times ; either from his rents, loans, or successful ventures at the gaming-table. These sums were regularly remitted to Italy ; and all Filippo's talents and address were put into requisition to keep under the clamours of the creditors, who were constantly put off with small portions of their bills, and promises of future payment and advantages. As the long-anticipated crisis approached, the foresight and industry of the infamous colleagues became more vigilant and determined ; till, at length, all they waited for was the last-promised remittance from the steward at Arlingham.

In the mean time, every possible preli-



minary to their flight was secretly arranged. All the plate and furniture were sold at great loss, in consideration of its not being immediately removed ; but, as it was of the most valuable and expensive kind, the sale, even under such circumstances, produced a large sum. At length Lord Montrevor received information that the remittance from Arlingham would arrive the following day. Immediately the doors of Vittoria's house were closed against all guests, and the work of more immediate preparation commenced.

Montrevor had a slight cold, of which she availed herself, with every mark of affectionate solicitude, to confine him to his apartment ; while the rapacious activity of herself and Filippo was securing every thing valuable which remained unsold, and was capable of removal.

While the principals of this disgraceful affair had been thus securing all within their reach, the subordinate inmates had individually not been inattentive to their

interests ; and peculation, in various forms, had been practised in every department. Though, therefore, several of the domestics, suddenly sent off, had no doubt that things were going wrong, still, as their own conduct would not bear investigation, they obeyed in silence ; hoping again to return to places in which they had so well found their account.

By the means above mentioned, Montrevor was easily incapacitated for observation or opposition after he had given the important packet to Vittoria ; and, no impediment arising, at the expiration of a few hours a chaise and four was rapidly conveying his false mistress, Filippo, and a favourite Italian maid-servant, to Dover ; from whence they immediately embarked for France.

Having communicated as many of the above particulars as she was acquainted with, Lord Montrevor's informant gave him the following letter, which her mistress had left for him. The wretched

man waved his hand for her to withdraw, and then opened the letter, conscious at length that he should learn nothing which his gloomy apprehension had not forestalled ; bewildered also with guilty recollections of his past conduct, and frightful presages of his approaching distress ; all of which suddenly pressed, with unutterable confusion, upon his agonized mind.

We will translate Vittoria's letter for our English readers :

“ The veil has long since fallen from my infatuated eyes, and now I drop the mask altogether. Montrevor, I once fondly loved you,—loved you with all the vehement warmth natural to my character : you slighted, scorned, deceived, abandoned me. Led by my mad passion, I followed, and meanly sued, and sued in vain, for a return of that love you had vowed should be eternal.

“ Pride for a time armed me against

you, and I left you to the workings of your own weak, vain, inconstant heart : but mine, unfortunately, could not forget its vows, and change its master. Again I sought this hated country, and the faithless, but still adored, Montrevor ; and again it was my fate to please your fickle fancy. In this return of long-lost pleasure, I forgot my wrongs, and for a time lived but in your love ; but, as I became more intimate with the leading features of your disposition, I saw the insecurity of my happiness. I discovered that the only bonds by which I could retain you, were not those of love and gratitude, but such as contributed to your gratification. The fever of my heart began to cool ; the sense of the injuries I received, and which had been smothered, not extinguished, revived ; and my long-neglected interest raised its voice. Then it became *my* turn to dissemble. You now see that my power to do so has, at least, equalled yours. Perhaps, to your

cold selfish heart, the retaliation, under which you now smart, may appear severe and disproportioned. But *I*, on the contrary, looking back to the grief, rage, and despairing anguish, that rent my enslaved heart, and almost deprived me of reason, when I found myself deserted by the only man I ever loved, who might even then have trained my steps to virtue : while I call to mind what I then suffered, oh ! how incomplete, how pitiful, do my present revenge and compensation appear. The paltry money I take with me is a poor gratification for years of complaisance and slavery ; but, bankrupt in love, honour, and principle, you had nothing else to give ; and I therefore receive it. My reason for leaving you privately, is to avoid scenes disgraceful to us both : not that I apprehend you would dare to question my right to the property I take with me, most of which you gave me, before witnesses, to dispose of ‘ as I pleased.’ When you remember

this, you cannot wonder that I should choose rather to appropriate it to my own necessities, than employ it in discharging your gambling-debts, or those which were incurred chiefly to gratify your fastidious taste, and keep you in good-humour. In thus breaking with you for ever, you have an advantage over me, which I had not in a similar situation:—you are treated with openness and sincerity; whereas, all the arts of a cruel, base dissimulation, were called forth to deceive me. Return to your tame, passive wife; make your peace with her; and try the novelty of a life of moderation and honesty, for which nature, perhaps, first intended you. Or, if you must again seek an object to share your versatile affections and broken fortunes, choose not another

VITTORIA.”

The indignation and rage, that had increased as Lord Montrevor read, now burst forth with uncontrolled violence.

He repeatedly struck his forehead with his clasped hands, uttering dreadful execrations against his own folly and credulity; then, breathing the severest vengeance against Vittoria, he rushed down stairs, calling loudly for horses to go in pursuit of the perfidious fugitive.

In descending, his ears were assailed by the noise of workmen; and, when he reached the hall, his farther progress was impeded by porters carrying off furniture, and a crowd of tradesmen with their bills in their hands; who, emboldened by the information they had received from the discarded servants, and the confusion they now witnessed, unanimously demanded immediate payment. Well might this wretched man have exclaimed, in the just, emphatic words of our immortal Bard:

“ When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions.”

Montrevor, rendered almost frantic, would have driven them by force from

the house; but, after an useless struggle, he suddenly became calm, and said to them,—“ I give you my word of honour, my friends, I will not quit this house, if you will have patience one day longer. Come again to-morrow at this time; I shall then have made the necessary arrangements; and, if I live, I will pay you all.”

Some bowed low, with obsequious apologies; others muttered, that “ sometimes, gentlemen, when things were desperate, had a strange way of shirking their creditors;” but all withdrew, and Lord Montrevor again took refuge in his chamber, the door of which he secured with care.

With him it might be truly said, that the past brought nothing but a barren anguish; and the future, big with painful uncertainty, and loaded with woes not its own, chased away those seducing phantoms of pleasure and hope, which



Providence kindly bestows to lessen the weight of those afflictions that extreme guilt has not rendered insupportable.

Thus destitute, thus abandoned, Lord Montrevor, in the deep mournful accents of despair, exclaimed, stopping short in the middle of the room, “ Yes, to-morrow—if I live—I will pay you all.” Then, with a frenzied gesture, he took down a brace of pistols from the wall, and, wildly brandishing them above his head, he burst forth into a horrid laugh, exclaiming, “ These, these, Montrevor’s last, best, only friends, shall pay all his debts ;—quench the raging fire here ;” frantically striking his breast ; “ silence this throbbing pulse ; and bear his freed spirit from a world made up of fawning, treachery, and black ingratitude ; whose highest enjoyments are but the prelude to still higher misery ; where, when you can no longer feast, dance and sing, and pay the costs, your mistress, friends, and very menials, all fly off ; and you are at

liberty to shut yourself in, as I do now, and make your last exit in what way you please. Be ye true, at least;" he continued, examining the pistols and their loading: "ye are my last resource, the healing balm for all my sufferings: soon, by your friendly means, shall dark oblivion bury at once my sorrows and my crimes. Ah! but will it be really so?—no matter: it is now too late. What awaits me beyond this life, I know not. Here is no longer any resting-place for me: the world contains not a single being, to whom the lost, degraded Montrevor can turn with confidence."

During the latter few sentences his utterance gradually became low and indistinct, and he had repeatedly paused. At last, slowly laying the pistols on the table, he walked about the room in increasing agitation; then, pressing his hands against his breast, labouring with a convulsive sigh, he murmured out, in deep hollow accents, "Oh! yes there is;

—aye, there is one whose tears will still bedew my grave ; and, though to her my crimes are great and many, Charlotte will grieve at my fate :—and my child ! she, too, will mourn a father who loved, though he afflicted, her.”

He now covered his face with his hands, and wept violently. His heart became softened by these first tears, which his anguish had wrung from him ; and for a few moments he entertained the idea of confiding his repentance and sorrows to his neglected wife, towards whom, at this awful period, he felt all his tenderness revive ; while an intimate knowledge of her virtue, and the unwearied affection she had preserved for him through years of trial and desertion, suggested the belief that she would receive him with kindness.

But with what grace could he offer the return of a heart shattered and debased by a long habitual devotion to an unworthy licentious object ? Could he even

deceive himself with the belief that, if that infamous woman had not basely deserted him, he should again have sought the society of his injured wife? How, then, could he hope to conceal this degrading fact from Lady Montrevor? No!—fallen as he was, never could he descend to this new humiliation, more galling than all the rest. The die was cast. Better Lady Montrevor should mourn him dead, than silently upbraid him living, with mean detestable hypocrisy.

During these reflections, some of the few remaining best feelings of Montrevor had been awakened; but, suspecting that they arose from nervous irresolution, he drank off a large glass of brandy; recapitulated the desperate state of his affairs, his pennyless situation, and his blasted character; then seized a pen, and hastily wrote the following letter to his wife:

“ MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

“ In what a moment am I restored to a just sense of your virtues and your injuries! Gloomy and foreboding, however, as is every thing around me, one bright spark still glimmers to light me on my darkened way. I feel already in my heart (and they cool, for a moment, the flaming brand that fires me,) the kind, the virtuous tears, with which you will lament a husband ever unworthy of you. When you think of the sad list of my errors, my crimes, and my misfortunes, remember also this sad declaration: In the midst of all my guilty wanderings and neglect, my heart, misled and corrupted as it was, revered, nay almost idolized your character; and, could I have found but one kindred virtue in my own bosom to have linked us together, I should still have loved you as at the commencement of our union, and as I now do at its harsh dissolution. Nature made

me fickle, and Vittoria made me false : thus my warped soul became daily more estranged from yours, till, victim of the most infernal treachery,—overwhelmed with debts which never could be liquidated,—my character branded with opprobrium,—my truant heart turns wholly back to you, and its last throb shall bear a blessing on your name. Well I know your gentle forgiving spirit will grieve that I did not again tax the strength of your oft-tried affection : but check those unavailing regrets ;—it could not be. Death is far preferable to the lingering, living, torment of seeing my wife, my child, associated with the disgrace, and almost penury, to which I have brought them.

“ Adieu, my Charlotte ! my Caroline ! The certainty that you will both bless, compassionate, and pardon, me, when I can offend no more, will sweeten my last pang, but it must not unnerve my hand. Farewell ! This world, which my faults

have poisoned, is fast fading before me. I will see only you—I will recal to my mind the sweet tones of your voice—I will fancy we shall meet again; and death will thus have few stings for

“ MONTREVOR.”

Finding the tears still streamed from his eyes, and alarmed lest his fortitude should fail in the execution of his purpose, he drank another goblet of brandy; then, having hastily sealed and directed his letter, he seized the fatal instrument, charged with self-destruction. With desperate resolution, he firmly fixed the mouth of the pistol against his temple. He paused an instant, ventured to raise his eyes to Heaven: footsteps approached; but the door was locked, he feared not intrusion. A door behind him, which he had omitted to fasten, suddenly burst open. At the same instant he fired; the blood flowed, and he fell into the arms of Mr. Byngham. The next minute

Lady Montrevor, uttering a piercing shriek, sunk senseless at the entrance of the room.

Assistance was immediately procured, and a surgeon sent for; when Mr. Byngham, having laid Lord Montrevor on the bed, and taken the best measures he was able to stop the effusion of blood, directed his attention to his sister, who was conveyed, still senseless, to another room. When she was sufficiently recovered, her brother ventured to assure her that Montrevor's terrible purpose had happily failed; but that, as nothing was so seriously to be apprehended as surprise and agitation in his present critical state, she must submit to his remaining ignorant that she was in the house.

Full as the agonized soul of Lady Montrevor was of horror, her first act was humbly to thank Heaven for its seasonable intervention, in preserving her husband from the commission of this last, this most heinous crime, which threatens



to close for ever the doors of mercy on the guilty soul. With grateful submission she then promised not to seek admittance to her husband's room; and, bathing the hand of her brother, now dearer than ever to her, with tears, she said, "Go, lose not a moment here: when you can bring me good news, I need not bid you come; the relief you will afford this wretched, almost widowed, heart will well reward you."

Mr. Byngham hastened to Montrevor, and soon after heard from the surgeons, who extracted the ball with great difficulty, that his lordship's recovery was possible, though by no means certain.

The sudden entrance of Mr. Byngham had caused an involuntary movement in the arm of Montrevor, so that, when he fired, the ball entered the forehead in a sloping direction, and made a very alarming wound in the upper part of the head. It was long before this unfortunate man in any degree recovered his recollection;

and then it was but a momentary flash, that served only to augment still more the fever with which he was seized, and which, in spite of every medical assistance, continued to rage, with but few and short intermissions for many days.

We will not attempt to keep pace with the agonized feelings, or trembling joy, that alternately agitated the bosom of his affectionate wife, as fear or hope prevailed. His melancholy state permitted her attendance without any danger of his being agitated. Immoveable, she watched his broken slumbers ; and, while holding his parched hand or bathing his burning temples, her heart was often ready to burst with anguish as she listened to the poignancy of his self-reproaches and impassioned supplications for her pardon, wholly unconscious that it was the wife he so pathetically implored who bedewed his pillow with her tears. Those tears, however, she constantly checked, as not in unison with the fervent gratitude, the

joy, she felt at being allowed to hope that, shaken as he was both in body and mind, his life would still be granted to her prayers. To these hopes, and to the performance of her melancholy duties, we will now leave her, while we give some account of circumstances which brought her and Mr. Byngham at so critical a moment to Lord Montrevor's apartment.

## CHAPTER VII.

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“Patience and sorrow strove  
Which should express her goodliest : you have seen  
Sunshine and rain at once ; her smiles and tears  
Were like a better day. Those happiest smiles,  
That played on her ripe lip, seem’d not to know  
What guests were in her eyes ; which parted thence,  
As pearls from diamonds dropt. In brief,  
Sorrow would be a rarity most belov’d,  
If all could so become it.”

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SHAKESPEARE.

MR. BYNGHAM had been but a short time returned to Devonshire, when he and his sister were called to attend the death-bed of their respected friend Mr. Taverner, who was seized with a disorder which immediately threatened to be fatal. Aware of his danger, he wished once more to see the son and daughter of the man to whose benevolent hand he owed the foundation of his success in that world which he was on the point of leaving. He did not enjoy that satisfac-

tion ; for, though the summons was immediately obeyed, he had breathed his last before Lady Montrevor and her brother arrived.

On opening the will of their lamented friend—who had not a single relation,—it appeared that, after liberally rewarding his dependents, and providing handsomely for Mrs. Mellorn, his property amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand pounds ; of which the sum of fifty thousand was bequeathed to Mr. Byng-ham, and in his hands was invested, as sole trustee, with the power of associating whom he pleased to the trust, and of appointing them by will to succeed him, a hundred thousand pounds for the use of Charlotte Baroness Montrevor ; fifty thousand of which she might dispose of during her life, with the consent of Mr. Byng-ham. Of the other fifty thousand she was to enjoy the income, but was restrained from touching the principal ; and had the power of giving it by will.

Mr. Byngham was not at all surprised at this arrangement ; as he had reason to believe it had been made in consequence of his own representations of the distressed state of Lord Montrevor's affairs, and of the unwearied affection his wife still entertained for him. Mr. Taverner had indeed, in this disposition of his property, considered much less the dictates of prudence, than what he knew would be the wishes of his adopted daughter—the amiable Lady Montrevor ; for whom (though in India at the time of her birth, and long after,) he had requested to answer as godfather. While, then, he secured to her an ample income that could not be diminished, and the power of bestowing a large fortune at her death on her daughter, he yielded to the pleasure of gratifying her, by enabling her to relieve the distresses of her husband ; who might, if not quite lost to all generous feeling, become, in consequence, worthy of her.

With grateful tears, Lady Montrevor blessed the considerate liberality of her friend. She felt the full force and tenderness of his partiality; and, amid the tumultuous sensations of joy to which his bounty gave rise, she sincerely regretted that he could never receive her thanks, never witness the happiness caused by his kindness. As soon as the last sad rites claimed by humanity, were over, and Mr. Byngham and his sister had followed their friend to the grave, they hastened to London; every hour seeming now an age, till Lady Montrevor could convey her newly-acquired wealth to her husband.

Fain would she have persuaded her brother to yield up his trust immediately, to the full extent of his power; and allow her at once to give Lord Montrevor the whole of the fifty thousand pounds.

“Still, Edward,” she said, “I shall be very rich, and so will Caroline. Suffer

me then effectually to relieve my husband from all his difficulties. When he feels himself so completely at ease in pecuniary concerns, who shall say that his heart, which once was generous and affectionate, may not resume its former virtues."

Bynham was affected by the entreaties of his sister, but immoveable in his purpose; and he determined to adhere strictly to what he had good reason to believe were the intentions of the testator. As soon, therefore, as the preliminary forms of law were gone through, he put his sister in possession of five-and-twenty thousand pounds; candidly declaring, that, if Lord Montrevor was still so lost, as to make an unworthy use of that sum, and continue his present improper conduct, nothing should induce him so grossly to betray his trust, as to enable her to furnish him with any farther supply. Lady Montrevor was reluc-



tantly compelled to submit to this decision ; and she immediately wrote to her husband, enclosing the money. Scorning to imply any conditions, as the reward of a conduct she felt to be as natural as gratifying, with trembling hand, and beating heart, she wrote simply the following lines :

“ MY DEAREST WILLIAM,

“ The sudden death, and liberality, of my good old friend Mr. Taverner (a copy of whose Will you will receive with this,) have made me very rich ; and my brother has enabled me to send you the sum of twenty-five thousand pounds, which I sincerely hope will relieve you from those pecuniary difficulties you mentioned to me when last at Arlingham. Our dear Caroline I left quite well, and, with Julia, is spending the time of my absence at Brookdale Parsonage. I shall immediately hasten home ; and, I trust, I shall

be able to assure her that her beloved father is in good health. Ever your

Most affectionate and devoted wife,

C. MONTREVOR.

“P.S.—Sir Charles Benwell is shortly to be married to Miss Huntley : he is at present in Yorkshire ; or I should not have permitted Caroline to become Mrs. Huntley’s guest.”

Lady Montrevor had just enclosed this letter in the parcel, for her brother to carry to the house they knew Lord Montrevor occupied in town, when Mr. Brown hastily entered the room.

This was a respectable tradesman, at whose house Mr. Byngham always lodged when he came to town on business ; and to which Lady Montrevor had this time accompanied him. He had formerly lived servant with Mr. Byngham ; but now kept a linen-draper’s shop in the neighbourhood of Lord Montrevor’s

house. Joy sparkled in his honest face, as, rubbing his hands, he said,—“I beg your ladyship’s pardon—I beg your honour’s pardon,—but I am so glad, I can hardly speak. I went myself to see if it is all true; and I am out of breath with running, that I might have the pleasure of telling my lady myself. Fine doings there have been, and a fine confusion she has left behind her; but no matter, since she is fairly gone: my lord’s eyes will now, to be sure, be open; and then—”

Brown had run on so far without any interruption, when Mr. Byngham stopped him, to inquire what he meant, and what was the cause of all his joy. They then received the assurance of Vittoria’s flight, and other circumstances, that induced Mr. Byngham to hasten to the house, and offer his advice and assistance to Lord Montrevor.

As he descended the stairs with Brown, Lady Montrevor caught enough from the whispers of the latter, to comprehend that

her husband was in distress from an accumulation of debts ; and reflecting that Vittoria, that worst enemy of her peace, being removed, there remained no impediment to her seeking Lord Montrevor in his distress, she determined to follow her brother, and use every means to prevail on him (if necessary) to relinquish the remaining twenty-five thousand pounds. Requesting, therefore, Brown to accompany her, she immediately followed Mr. Byngham ; who, having reached the house but a few minutes before, had heard from the maid-servant particulars which greatly alarmed him. After describing the strange and furious behaviour of her master, she added,—“ He is now, sir, locked fast in his bed-chamber ; and, hearing him talk loud, I listened at the door a few minutes back, and plainly heard him snap one pistol after another, as if he was trying them.”

“ Shew me the way ;” hastily cried Byngham, seized with the most horrid

apprehensions :—" but you say the door is locked."

" So it is," she replied ; " but there is another, which perhaps is not fastened."

Saying this, she led him to a back staircase which he rapidly ascended, heedless even of his sister, who, suspecting the dreadful cause of his agitation, closely followed him. With what occurred afterward, the reader is already acquainted.

When every possible assistance was rendered to his unfortunate and guilty brother-in-law, and his own mind became a little composed, Mr. Byngham collected the different letters and papers that lay scattered about the room. From these he learnt the accumulation of the calamitous blows that had so suddenly fallen on the head of Montrevor : under which,—stung also, no doubt, by bitter remorse,—he scarcely wondered that his courage had so completely sunk.

A long acquaintance with sorrow, never

to be removed, though much softened by time, had engraven on the mind of Mr. Byngham a strong sense of religion, and a pious conviction of the superintendence of a wise and merciful God over the affairs of men. Thus, even in the terrible catastrophe now before him, hope and virtuous confidence taught him to see the hand of an all-gracious Providence, leading back, by a most awful road, one of its creatures to repentance.

Encouraged by these happy presentiments, while Montrevor lay insensible to all surrounding objects,—sometimes in a lethargic stupor, at others raving under the influence of wild delirium,—Byngham, with Christian compassion, and active benevolence, was examining, arranging, and transacting, his affairs. The debts contracted at play, as they appeared the most pressing, so were they the first discharged; and the eventful “morrow,”—to which the unhappy man had, in the gloomy desperation of his

mind, referred his creditors,—saw all their claims satisfied.

Montrevor's removal from the house was impracticable : but, during his delirium, his room was changed for one with which he was little acquainted ; every arrangement was made, by this considerate friend, to remove all that could, when his reason returned, recall to his mind the incidents which had immediately preceded his fatal attempt. His own attendants arrived from Devonshire ; and Lady Montrevor, in trembling hope, busied herself in arranging the furniture of his new apartment ; and, with unaffected delicacy, banishing not only thence, but also from all other parts of the house, every remaining memento of its late inhabitant.

At length Lord Montrevor's fever abated ; and, though dreadfully weakened, the surgeons and physicians declared the crisis past ; and that, if his mind could be kept quiet, he might soon reach

a state of convalescence. For this purpose gentle opiates were constantly administered, to blunt or suppress, till he was better able to encounter them,—the recollections that would agitate him, and retard his recovery. By degrees his strength increased; his wound wore a promising appearance; and the critical time arrived, when, collecting his scattered senses, memory began to be active, and his straining eye-balls sought to penetrate beyond the objects that surrounded them. Often before he spoke he closed their aching lids, while he endeavoured to arrange the confused ideas he entertained of what had happened, where he was, and who were those near him.

Bynham had marked the approach of this moment, from the quick turns of Montrevor's eyes, and the frequent application of his hand to his forehead. He then made a sign to his sister to withdraw from observation; but, remaining himself before him, he waited for a fa-



vorable instant to speak, when he might do so with least danger of exciting too sudden an emotion ; and, seeing the tears stealing from beneath the closed eye-lids of Montrevor, he said, in kindest accents, —“ My friend, you are getting better : how happy it will make us all !”

Lord Montrevor opened his eyes, saying, “ Yes, it is Byngham : oh ! tell me,—but no—do not—do not clear away the mist that swims before me.”

He then covered his face with his hands, and continued to weep. Mr. Byngham suffered the tears to flow, rightly judging they were a salutary omen ; and that, nature thus relieved, his mind would soon be restored to its usual tone. When he judged he might prudently revert to the past, he gradually, and with tenderness, entered upon what he thought most calculated to sooth his anguish, and heal his wounded spirit.

As, by degrees, Lord Montrevor learnt that his honor and character remained

untarnished in the world, and that all his debts were paid by Mr. Taverner's legacy to his wife, his joy was great ; but when he read Lady Montrevor's letter, and understood what he owed to the noble disinterestedness of that amiable woman, cautiously as Mr. Byngham had proceeded, his mental anguish was almost insupportable ; and so greatly alarmed his friend, that, fearing the consequences of farther agitation, he forcibly retained Lady Montrevor, who, concealed behind the curtain of the bed, was on the point of appearing to offer all the consolation in her power.

Insensible to every thing, but the acuteness of his own feelings, and the poignancy of his self-reproaches, Montrevor noticed not what passed so near him ; and, after a painful silence of some length, he exclaimed,—“ Oh ! Byngham, how little have I deserved this kindness from you ! I, who have wronged, neglected, and insulted, your angel sister.

And can it be possible that, at the moment when I meditated the last consummation of a guilty life, her pure exalted affection was sacrificing, to my disgraceful necessities, that affluence which would well have compensated for the loss of one so unworthy of her?—but it is over,—my crimes cry louder even than her virtues. What a heart have I thrown from me; and for whom?”—Violent sobs here reached his ear; he started: the next moment, his wife, no longer to be restrained, sprung to the side of the bed, exclaiming, “That heart is all your own, dearest Montrevor: I cannot bear that you should for a moment doubt my love, and readiness to forget the past. Bless me with one look of former affection, and I am richly paid for all I have endured.”

In vain she waited a reply; her husband's head had sunk upon her neck, and his senses had for a time forsaken him.

Alarmed at the imprudence to which she had been led, by the most uncontrollable emotion, Lady Montrevor was now again herself, and would, of her own accord, have withdrawn; but the physician, (who was an old friend of the family,) entering at the time, and learning what had occurred, advised her to stay; saying it was only a fainting fit, and that, on recovering, his lordship would suffer less from surprise or joy, than from the confused ideas and afflicting sensations her absence would create. Lord Montrevor shortly revived; when Dr. N— drew Mr. Byngham into the adjoining room.

We shall, no doubt, be pardoned for declining to describe the scene that ensued between Lord and Lady Montrevor. Indeed we confess we have not words or colours to paint to our satisfaction the heart-felt repentance and sincerity of returning affection on one side; or the gentle, yet noble, forgiving spirit, and

generous warmth of female tenderness, on the other. Suffice it then to say, that, notwithstanding every nerve had been strained and shaken almost to the extremest point, yet from this moment Montrevor's recovery was progressive, though slow; and that though apprehensions, which were easily awakened, of a relapse, often brought tears to the eyes of his exemplary wife, yet the smile of flattering hope frequently lighted up features, which patient sorrow had not power to disrobe of their best charms—the expression of virtue and goodness. These bright graces, beaming in the still fine countenance of Lady Montrevor,—who was now but a few years past the meridian of life,—rendered her, if not as *handsome*, certainly as attractive, as ever.

Mr. Byngham had communicated to her the letter which her husband had written just before his desperate act; and, though its perusal cost her many tears, it brought its balm along with it;

since it proved that, though so long and cruelly estranged from her, his heart, unsolicited, returned to her at last.

As soon as it was possible to remove Lord Montrevor with safety, he was conveyed to another house in town; when Mr. Byngam hastened to relieve the maternal affection of Lady Montrevor, and set out to fetch her daughter and Julia from Mr. Huntley's.

As Lord Montrevor began to feel the re-establishment of his health, he experienced also the sense of relief from all the sad train of unsettled feelings that had for many years oppressed him. It is, I fear, a just observation on the human mind, that the impressions of pain and uneasiness, if not at first deeper, are in their nature much more lasting than those of pleasure; of guilty pleasures most certainly. Lord Montrevor was now an instance of this truth: the glittering follies and seductive gratifications, once so eagerly sought and dearly purchased,

were almost forgotten, or only remembered to point the anguish, and increase the horror, with which he turned from all thoughts of the life he had pursued, that he might express his thanks to heaven, and his beloved Charlotte, for his late preservation and present happiness ; while he feelingly anticipated the enjoyment and tranquillity he at length hoped to find in the shades of Arlingham, and in the bosom of his family.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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" Young let the lover be, the lady old,  
 And that disparity of years shall prove  
 No bane of peace, although some bar to love :  
 'Tis not the worst, our nuptial ties among,  
 That joins the antient bride and bridegroom young ;  
 Young wives, like changing winds, their power display,  
 By shifting points, and varying day by day ;

\* \* \* \* \*

But like a trade wind is the antient dame,  
 Mild to your wish, and every day the same ;  
 Steady as time, no sudden squalls you fear,  
 But set full sail, and with assurance steer."

CRABBE.

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WHILE the lately described awful scenes were passing in town, Brookdale and its neighbourhood were not destitute of events.

Fanny Huntley, as we related many pages back, had at an early age lost, by a malignant malady, a great portion of personal beauty. Her mind, however, still retained all its virtues and attractions. Sir Charles Benwell, being related to the family, had often been a resident guest at Mr. Huntley's ; and,



during those visits, the generous warmth and manly sincerity of his character had gradually excited a tender preference in the bosom of Miss Huntley. In the never failing resources of a well-regulated mind, she found however, if not tranquillity, yet self-approval, and the power of concealing and restraining, if not of subduing, an ill-placed sentiment. She had suffered much in struggling with her feelings, while watching the progress of the baronet's attachment to Miss Montrevor; an attachment of which she was often, reluctantly, even compelled to be the confidant.

When brought to her father's, after the duel, and he became an object of the interest and attention of the whole house, it required all the exertion of Fanny's prudence to conceal her secret from common observation; but to evade the affectionate, vigilant penetration of her mother was impossible. Mrs. Huntley was at first greatly distressed by this disco-

very ; but, possessing much knowledge of the world, and human nature, she soon began to think it more than possible, that, in the present *favorable* situation of affairs, the friendly disposition of Sir Charles towards her daughter might easily be improved to a participation of her sentiments. Without, then, the slightest insinuation of the motives and wishes that actuated her, even to Fanny, this prudent old lady, while she cautiously and unremittingly superintended the arrangements of the sick chamber, was particularly careful that all the thousand nameless offices of succouring friendship should be performed by her daughter.

The baronet was precisely the man to be so sought, and so won. Convinced that his late pursuit, if ever doubtful, was now decidedly fruitless ; he began resolutely to make up his mind to his present situation ; quickly yielded to reason and necessity ; and hopeless love became to

him only a temporary disappointment. In this state of mind, he noticed, with grateful feelings, the indefatigable attention of Miss Huntley to his comfort and amusement. To these favorable observations soon succeeded the discovery, that, if her features were not handsome, the expression of her countenance was remarkably good and pleasing. Then she was only a year or two older than himself; and he was convinced of the great sweetness of her disposition and temper.

Thus, by almost imperceptible degrees, his heart admitted sentiments of a rational and warm regard, much more likely to contribute to his happiness, than those which had lately so much perplexed him. Such being the state of mind of the two parties, the moment of explanation was not long delayed; and Mrs. Huntley, in addition to the prospect of Fanny's being so advantageously settled, had the self-satisfaction of think-

ing she had greatly facilitated this desirable object.

Miss Huntley received the proposals of Sir Charles with grateful tenderness; and every preliminary being easily adjusted, as soon as he was able to travel, he went into Yorkshire to superintend some necessary repairs to the family mansion, preparatory to his marriage.

Another important event that occurred about the same period, was the avowed intended union between the Right Hon. Lady Eleanor Carlmaine, sister of the Earl of Ashmore, and the Rev. Stephen Thornton. In vain had the respective relatives on both sides endeavoured to prevent so ill-assorted an alliance. Her ladyship long pleaded, most pathetically, the cause of her first attachment, and the irresistible decrees of fate. But still her brother continued to censure, and even ridicule, her choice, as preposterous and almost disgraceful; repre-

senting, with much sense and judgment, the risk she ran of being unhappy with a man so much younger than herself.

At length, impatient at lectures in disapprobation of resolutions she had already formed, Lady Eleanor, as ungenerously as weakly, silenced advice prompted by regard, by declaring she was convinced that nothing but mercenary considerations could cause such unkind opposition to an union, which was, in every point of view, so much for her happiness.

“Brother,” said she, with much indignation, “after sacrificing to you and your family all the *spring* of my life, it is most unhandsome of you to require my *summer* also ; and ask me to forego this golden opportunity ; perhaps the only one I may ever have of meeting with a protector, friend, and husband, exactly to my mind. You, Lord Ashmore, who used to be fond of elegant literature, may remember those beautiful lines of

the poet, which, I think, may be well applied to my case :

“There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken in the flood, leads on to fortune ;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.”

Thus it might possibly be with me, were I to reject the love of Mr. Thornton. No, brother, it is time I should think a little of myself. Your son and daughter are well provided for ; and it would be cruel to wish to benefit them at the price of a sister's happiness. Indeed I have done much, and Mr. Stephen also, in consenting that, should we not be blessed with offspring, my property shall go as I always intended it should do, in case I died unmarried ; that is, to my nephew Carlmaine. You have therefore, my lord, no reason to complain ; and I hope you will not, by setting yourself against my wishes, tempt me to forget my affection for you and your children.” The

implied threat had no great weight with Lord Ashmore ; but he had really a true regard for his sister, and, seeing she was resolutely bent on the mad step in question, and reflecting how difficult, nay almost impossible, it is to turn ladies of a certain age, and on certain subjects, he determined to offer no further opposition ; but to enter, with all the interest he really felt for her welfare, into the necessary arrangements for this unequal union.

Mr. Stephen Thornton, on the other hand, was persecuted by serious opposition from every part of his family. Mrs. Thornton was outrageous on the occasion. She could not at first give credit to her own suspicions ; but when they were confirmed by repeated observation, she proposed to her son, without hinting at her reasons, that he should go with his father, and spend some time with relations they had in a distant county. But Stephen said, he had no incli-

nation to shift his quarters ; game was plentiful ; the horses and dogs all in fine order ; and his father might go alone, then there would be better sport at home for him.

His mother, enraged at an opposition she had never before met with, reproached him with his unaccountable, unnatural, and frightful attentions to Lady Eleanor Carlmaine. “ Yes, Stephen,” she continued ; “ I repeat *unnatural* ; for what on earth can be more so, than that a young man like you should have an idea of marrying a woman old enough to have been his mother ? You have frequently thought yourself in love ; and pray let me ask, if it is possible you are so with this antiquated old maid ? No, you cannot surely be such a fool as that.”

“ I have often,” answered Stephen, sulkily, “ had good reason to think myself a fool for making up to the young ladies you allude to ; some of whom, too, were of your recommending, mother.”



“ Well, my dear Stephen,” answered his mother, softening somewhat her voice and manner ; “ I will confess you have indeed been rather unfortunate in these matters. But take courage, my son ; we will go up to town, and spend a real season there ; see every thing, and every body ; give dinners, balls, and concerts, like other people : and I will forfeit my right hand, that it is your own fault if you do not succeed in finding more than one lovely, amiable, *young* woman, who would be very desirous of becoming Mrs. Stephen Thornton, and making you very happy ; and who would soon render you completely ashamed of having even thought of such a woman as Lady Eleanor.”

Poor Mrs. Thornton, in her great anxiety to produce cogent reasons on a subject she had so much at heart, wholly forgot the wide difference between her own taste and that of her son. Thus, the arguments she used and the lures she

held out to recommend a season in London were, unfortunately, precisely calculated to counteract her views ; for Stephen had inherited from his father, and constantly encouraged in himself, an utter aversion to all fashionable assemblies and amusements ; and he now, in increased ill-humour, exclaimed, “ I never wish to see London again as long as I live ; and, as for your balls and concerts, rather than be at either, I would spend a whole day up to my neck in water after snipes, and never bag one.”

His mother saw her error ; and, by kindness, threats, supplications, and even tears, sought to repair it, and divert him from a purpose he no longer denied. His sisters joined in ridiculing and condemning his choice without mercy ; while the Doctor, with great good-nature and indulgence, endeavoured to prove that such a marriage could not possibly be any way to his advantage ; and that his happiness would be far more probable, as it was

more natural, with a young woman : concluding, however, that he was old enough to judge for himself ; and that, having given this opinion, he did not mean to interfere any more in the business.

Stephen listened to all parties with the stupid unconcern of an obstinate man, who was determined to be influenced by no one ; and, when they seemed to have exhausted all they had to say, he deliberately thanked the Doctor for allowing him to please himself ; and then, addressing his mother, he said, “ I am also much obliged to you, mother, for I know you mean me well ; but you are quite mistaken. I have thought much on the subject, and I am sure I should not be happy with a very young woman : I never can understand them ; they are never the same ten minutes together. Now, Lady Eleanor knows what she is about ; and I know, too, she is tired of the name of old maid, and she feels much

obliged to me for ridding her of it. I say, she is *obliged* to me: now, that is the very woman to my mind, and one I shall always find civil and satisfied. Besides, she is not so very old as you seem to think; as she tells me there was a mistake in the Peerage-book, which she never thought it worth while to set right. Another good thing is, she is fond of reading romances, and so on; and will, therefore, not want me to dangle after her in a morning: and she has promised not to ask me to go to London; nor, in short, to do any thing I don't quite like. So, I say again, Lady Eleanor Carlmaine for me; and Lady Eleanor Carlmaine I will positively marry."

Never, in all his life, had Stephen displayed such wonderful powers of oratory; and having, at the conclusion of his speech, impressed upon his auditors the firmness of his determination by elevating his voice, and violently striking the table with his clenched fist, he quitted

the room with an air of entire self-satisfaction.

Thus did the unshaken constancy of Mr. Stephen Thornton and Lady Eleanor conquer the opposition of their respective friends, and nothing delayed the happy day but the absence of Lord Carlmaine ; who her ladyship much wished should be present at the ceremony, particularly as (foreseeing, from the first, how the business would end with his enamoured aunt,) he was the only one of the family who had not attempted to dissuade her from the match.

Though Lady Montrevor was grieved, at her return from Worcestershire, to see her old friend Lady Eleanor lay herself so open to general censure and ridicule, she earnestly endeavoured to place the circumstance in as favourable a light as possible ; reminding the numerous and well-pleased propagators of scandal, with which all neighbourhoods abound, that Lady Eleanor Carlmaine was very

healthy, active, and young of her age ; and Mr. Thornton, on the contrary, appeared much older than men at his time of life usually did, from the uncommon steadiness of his character, and want of animation in his manners.

Julia, on first hearing this charitable apology, had been unable to refrain from a sly glance and smile at Caroline, which passed not unobserved by Lady Montrevor ; who thence took occasion to impress on the minds of both, the necessity of restraining, with the most prudent caution, every look or expression that could possibly be construed into a disrespectful meaning, and which might give offence to any part of either of the respectable families concerned. Thus warned, when they accompanied her ladyship to pay her friendly congratulations at Brookdale, even Caroline's behaviour was not more guarded and proper than our heroine's, though she had been most severely tried by the languishing

airs practised by Lady Eleanor, and the newly-acquired awkward consequence of Stephen, who seemed to have derived an unusual degree of self-importance from the conviction that he was about to act for himself,—that is to say, in opposition to the opinion of every one else.

That we may not have occasion to interrupt our narrative at a less convenient time, we will here inform the reader that Sir Charles Benwell, having completed the business that carried him into Yorkshire, returned with all proper expedition to tie the indissoluble knot, that was to put an end to several matrimonial speculations he had contemplated within the last few years.

In the bride he carried down to the house of his forefathers, he had the good fortune to find through life a gentle companion, a faithful friend, and an affectionate wife. They had several children; and, though the Baronet enjoyed occasionally, to a very late age, a good fox-

chance, yet the pleasures he found at home gradually and largely encroached upon the enjoyments abroad, in which he had before chiefly spent his time.

Mr. and Mrs. Huntley, almost to the equal delight of their daughter and her husband, had an opportunity a few years after of exchanging, with Lord Ashmore's concurrence, the living of Brookdale for one in the neighbourhood of Sir Charles's property ; where they passed the remainder of their lives in witnessing and sharing the happiness of the child on whom they doted.

For the reason stated above, we will also give here in brief the remaining history of our friend, Lady Eleanor. Lord Carlmaine returned in due time from Ireland, and joined the festive throng assembled, by her ladyship's special invitation, to grace her nuptials. Doctor Thornton had given up to his son, on his marriage, a very good estate in Leicestershire, where the happy couple went



immediately to reside ; and the bride, desirous of showing how much she consulted the inclinations of her husband, pressed his favourite sister to accompany them.

It cannot be said that Stephen Thornton ever greatly regretted his marriage. Indeed, the total want of all energy of character, as well as his very limited capacity, generally prevented the displeasures and inconveniences attendant equally on retrospection and anticipation. The past was nothing to him, and the future he thought not much about ; but the present he enjoyed with all the animal powers nature had given him, in the possession of pleasures neither exalted nor refined, but exempt from the intrusion of those ambitious corrosive feelings, which ill-fated genius is often doomed to experience.

By his union with Lady Eleanor, he had obtained, with as little trouble as possible, an establishment of his own,

and a wife, who, if she was not always *civil* and *satisfied*, suffered him to do very much as he pleased ; provided she had her regular number of attendants, a good equipage, with now and then a splendid entertainment. They had no offspring ; and Stephen, alternately good-humoured, heavy, or sulky, so far from dangling after his wife, by no chance ever saw her during the day, but at the hour of dinner.

His whole long mornings were spent in sporting pursuits with Cecilia, (who almost constantly lived with them,) and his evenings were invariably dedicated to recruiting slumbers.

Thus it proved, to quote Mr. Stephen's own observation, a very *good thing* that her ladyship was fond of reading, as many hours went lightly by which would otherwise have weighed heavily ; and in the evening she was amused by the good-humoured, if not elegant and instructive, conversation of Cecilia, or a game at

piquet ; of which, from a wish of contributing to dissipate her ladyship's *ennui*, the obliging girl had at length, with much patience and perseverance, made herself mistress. Fortunately for Lady Eleanor, the death of her father-in-law restored her to the neighbourhood of her youth, while she was yet able to enjoy the advantages of her near affinity to the noble owner of Brookdale.

## CHAPTER IX.

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"Soft love, spontaneous tree, its parted root  
Must from two hearts with equal vigour shoot ;  
Whilest each delighted and delighting, gives  
The pleasing ecstasy which each receives :  
Cherish'd with hope, and fed with joy, it grows :  
Its cheerful buds their op'ning bloom disclose,  
And round the happy soil diffusive odour flows."

} PRIOR.

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It may be recollected that Selwyn quitted Arlingham much agitated by what he had hastily conceived the certainty of Julia's attachment to Lord Carlmaine,—a conviction that sensibly affected him. In vain he sought to arm his mind to bear the disappointment of views, which, though but of a few hours' growth, had yet made the progress of an age in hope.

Every lively, yet gentle, accent of Julia had fallen on his ravished ear like softest drops of summer-showers on the parched and thirsty plain : her cheerful unaffected smiles still played around his heart ;

while the enchanting expression of her eyes had penetrated to his inmost soul. The seducing passion, whose influence he now powerfully experienced, brought with it its usual alternations. At one time he dwelt with rapturous recollection upon the quickly passing moments which he had spent with Julia ; at another, the elegance of her manners, and the charms of her conversation, faded before his sickening fancy, and, stung with jealousy, he envied—he hated—the favoured Carlmaine.

At length reason, and the best feelings of Selwyn's nature, began slowly to exert their power. He reflected, that, if his cousin was really so charmed by Julia as to seek her in marriage, his principles were better than he had supposed them ; consequently, Julia might find her happiness with him, and in a rank of life which, he doubted not, would possess for her many attractions. And, were she but happy, even without his means, he

tried to think he could in time become reconciled to her loss. Then again doubts arose of Lord Carlmaine's sincerity and constancy, and hope whispered that all might yet not be wholly lost ; and he reflected that Julia's emotion at the mention of Lord Carlmaine's name was not, after all, wholly conclusive of her love for him. It was possible her confusion might arise from some other cause, and her heart might still be free.

These reflections produced sensations similar to a reprieve, and, with his agitation somewhat quieted, and his heart partially relieved and encouraged, he resolved to keep, as much as possible, his own feelings in subjection, and wait with patience the *eclaircissement*. The singular predicament in which he stood, relative to Lord Carlmaine, was highly distressing to him ; occasioning a constant struggle between a newly-excited passion and a just sense of the forbearance honour demanded of him. The

constant result of all his reflections on the subject, was to abstain from any attempt to engage the affection of Julia, till his cousin's pretensions and success were ascertained. This compromise with his feelings and his honour, he persuaded himself, was fully warranted by his intimate knowledge of the inconstant and libertine character of Lord Carlmaine.

Julia had indeed felt much confused at the mention of Lord Carlmaine's name, and her spirits had been considerably ruffled. Conscious how highly she had coloured, and recollecting that Mr. Selwyn might have been led to notice it, from having previously seen their meeting at the Lodge, she concluded his abrupt departure had arisen from one of the momentary disgusts which she had often fancied she could remark in him, when any thing occurred, or any opinion was started, contrary to his strict sense of propriety. She was at a loss to guess what had past in his thoughts relative to

herself on the occasion ; but she felt assured it could not be very favourable, and she experienced a depression of mind, which she could neither get the better of, nor account for. Many times she now repeated to herself that her conduct, respecting Lord Carlmaine, though imprudent, was, on the strictest self-examination, free from all *intentional* wrong; and consequently not of a nature to excite internal remorse, though she had suffered much from sincere regret for her folly. And as for Mr. Selwyn, he had always appeared much more ready to censure, and misconstrue, than commend her words and actions ; she should certainly therefore not allow any considerations of what opinion he might form of her, to disturb her peace.

She had borne from necessity the concealment of her feelings from Lady Montrevor, and her brother ; and never would she be embarrassed by the impertinent scrutiny of any one else, and least of all



of Adolphus Selwyn. Still all this haughty independance of spirit—the natural ebullition and present refuge of her simple, untutored heart, seemed gradually to exhaust itself; and “What will Adolphus Selwyn think of me?” was precisely the question she incessantly and almost unconsciously, asked herself.

The cause of this inconsistency is doubtless, by this time, understood by our fair readers; though it was still a perfect enigma to our heroine. She was, indeed, like most rational beings, moulded by the incidents of her life; and it was one of these incidents, which was now to constitute her trial, viz. the secret attachment of a man, who was fastidious and difficult to please; yet possessed every estimable quality that could gratify female pride; and at times discovered all that tenderness and affection which was calculated to excite the warmest love.

Julia Lawrence had never, till lately,

heard much of love ; and when it did come under her observation, (excepting in the well-regulated heart of Miss Montrevor, or in the unimpassioned one of Edward Byngham,) it had shewn itself in such whimsical colours in her surrounding acquaintance, that she was more inclined to consider it as a light fever of the brain, than a warm, steady sentiment of the mind. And if ever the thought of love, as relative to herself, entered her yet untouched heart ; she instantly chaced it thence with feelings compounded of sensibility, hauteur, and cheerfulness ; which, acting at once on the tenderness of her nature, and the characteristic features of her disposition, would lead her sometimes to say to her friend : “ No, Caroline, love was not made for me ; though I dare say I *could* love with all my might, if I had every thing my own way. But that you know is not likely to be my case ; for, though by good luck I am not “ *sans* eyes, *sans*

teeth, *sans* nose, &c." I am, unfortunately, *sans* rank, *sans* natural connexions, *sans* fortune, and *sans* every thing most attractive in this world : I am sure, too, that I never could be happy to owe all to the man I married, and bring him only barren love, and my poor pittance of a fortune. It is not in my nature to curtsy, and say—thank you, Sir ; so I must submit to share Lady Eleanor's fate ; happy at last, if, when time may have worn away my scruples, I may have the good fortune to meet with another Stephen Thornton ; unless—unless— :” Julia had the discretion to suppress the remaining part of a sentence, that would have spoken the romantic hopes which occasionally gilded the visions of her fancy, respecting some future information to be received on the subject of her parents.

In a moment of thoughtless, irresistible confidence, she had made Ursula acquainted with the history of the casket ; but she had frequently reproached her-

self for this inattention to Lady Montrevor's advice, and had carefully preserved the secret from every one else. Unlearned in all the insinuating windings of love to gain entrance into the youthful heart, she never sought to guard against it, or became sensible of its approach ; when under the idea of Selwyn, it began gradually to mix with every thought.

In the interview we have described, she had experienced very unusual satisfaction ; and, though wholly unconscious of all the meaning of the admiration his looks betrayed, she was pleased and flattered by the agreeable manner in which he had conversed with her ; and now that she feared he might form unfavorable suspicions of her, she could no longer conceal from herself the pain such an idea excited. Still, however, influenced by the native innocence of her mind ; and also unconsciously, and naturally shrinking from the first approaches of a senti-

ment so new and undefined, she attributed her past pleasure, and present vexation to a very reasonable wish of gaining the estimation of a man, whose friendship was so highly valued by her brother.

Such was the state of Julia's mind when Lady Montrevor, being summoned with Mr. Byngham into Worcestershire, left her and Miss Montrevor under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Huntley. No situation, as it respected Selwyn and Julia, could be more favorable to the rapid increase of a newly excited preference. The vicinity of the parsonage to Brookdale, and the intimacy between the two families, produced a constant intercourse, which imperceptibly became daily more agreeable to them.

The long consulted reason of Selwyn was now, for the first time in his life, lulled to sleep, or held in subjection, by a passion that gathered strength with every succeeding interview; and his soul,

as if to make amends for past restraints, now yielded with ardour and enthusiasm to the delightful train of feelings inspired by the presence of a beloved object. The die was indeed now cast. All his visionary ideas of female perfection were brought down to the level of Julia Lawrence; or rather her character, temper, and disposition, viewed through the happy medium of approving love, all rose to the highest standard his imagination had ever raised. His mother's portrait, by time and familiarity, had lost its warning power, and was no longer associated with the thought of Julia. Caution shook its head; Prudence fell prone at the feet of youthful passion; while Love, and all his sprightly train, laughed at the disappointed mien of sage Philosophy.

Of his own sentiments, Selwyn could no longer doubt; but, with the usual blind infatuation of passion, he conceived he kept within the strict bounds of honor,

by resolving to conceal them from every one, and more particularly from the object of them ; while he was most anxious to discover the nature of Julia's feelings respecting Lord Carlmaine. Since the memorable hour, in which he had seen her, bending, distressed and blushing, over the vase of flowers, nothing had occurred decidedly to confirm, or wholly to remove, the suspicions he had then formed.

It was true, she generally coloured highly whenever his name was mentioned ; but then again, when, contrary to expectation, they learnt that his Lordship's stay in Ireland was prolonged, Selwyn had remarked an undisguised appearance of satisfaction in the manner, and even in an unguarded expression, of Julia's, which almost convinced him of her indifference towards him. In the pleasure which this belief excited, he ceased to dwell on the singularity of her behaviour on other occasions ; or thought it might have its

rise in some unimportant circumstance, foreign to the subject that interested him. Still, however, there remained sufficient room for fear and uncertainty — that chief, best fuel of a growing attachment ; and, with the exception of some occasional characteristic doubts of success, and feelings of jealousy, Selwyn thought of little else than of enjoying the smiling present.

When the heart of a man, such as we have described Adolphus Selwyn, glows with feelings so warm, so generous, and tender, we all know how great, how irresistible is the charm they lend to the most simple words or gestures, where the affection of the person to whom they are addressed is not steeled by a prior engagement. No wonder, then, if Julia early began to suspect she had been much mistaken in the opinion she had formed of Selwyn. She recollected, with pleasure, that she had always done him the justice to think most highly of his character and principles ; but now, that



she was so much better acquainted with him, she discovered that his manners, so far from being harsh, were more agreeable than those of any man she had ever known. Every hour passed in his society increased that good opinion ; and soon, every minute so spent rendered her more conscious of the nature of those sentiments which almost every look of Selwyn's involuntarily betrayed. Soon, however, as this discovery was made, it was not before the heart of our heroine had experienced many confused sensations, highly favourable to the wishes of her lover.

Had Julia been at first aware of the tendency of these new emotions ; could she have reflected how soon approbation ripens into esteem ; how much sooner esteem, on such occasions, becomes love ; she was experienced and prudent enough to have started at the thought of encouraging wishes for an event, rendered so very improbable by the great disproportion of her situation in life with that

of Selwyn. But, as we before said, her breast was wholly unacquainted with all the progressive symptoms of love, and her mind perfectly untainted by the various speculations relative thereto; she had, therefore, unguardedly embarked on that tumultuous ocean where the best affections, with peace and happiness, are often wrecked, before the danger is perceived.

While our heroine was only beginning to be sensible of these surrounding dangers, every fear was hushed, and every hope excited, by reading, in the expressive language of Selwyn's countenance, that she was beloved by the first—the only man, who had ever awakened in her bosom a sentiment that could approach, in the slightest degree, to the tenderness she felt for Frederick. Under this delightful persuasion, she yielded, with all the natural warmth of her disposition, to the pleasing visions of hope and joy. Though virgin modesty united with the

native dignity of her mind, to guard her secret from the penetration of a man who already seemed to live but in the newly found enjoyment of gazing upon her ; yet the ingenuous expression of her features seconded but ill her wishes on this occasion, and gave every reasonable encouragement.

Happy in what he ventured to believe were favorable appearances, Selwyn sometimes almost wished for Lord Carlmaine's return, flattering himself that this event would terminate an uncertainty, which, though often forgotten, still existed. He determined to learn from his cousin, at their first interview, what were his positive views respecting Miss Lawrence, and to regulate the degree of confidence to be placed in him by the communication he should then receive. In the mean time, he strengthened himself in the resolution not to make any advances towards securing the favor of Julia, till he had had some personal communication with

Lord Carlmaine : that, whatever should happen, he might retain the power of acting according to the dictates of honor, if he were forced to forego those of inclination.

Yet, amidst his most sanguine hopes, tormenting apprehensions frequently arose to shade the bright hours he enjoyed. In these seasons, when gloomy forebodings reigned, he felt a most anxious wish for the continuance of Lord Carlmaine's absence, trusting that time would equally befriend him, in destroying in his cousin what he could not but believe a mere passing inclination ; and also enable him to inspire Julia with sentiments congenial to his own. At present, he could not flatter himself, that the small interest he was sometimes disposed to believe he had gained in her heart, would be sufficient to induce her to refuse the brilliant offers made by such a man as Lord Carlmaine,—if indeed he persisted ; with whose inconstant character and ir-

regular conduct she could not be acquainted. No! he dared not expect it; it was scarcely in woman; and, when a splendid establishment was the tempting bribe, he feared that he must not expect to find an exception in Julia Lawrence.

All his hopes, then, rested upon Lord Carlmaine's well-known wavering humour, his pride of birth and family, and his wish of forming a splendid alliance; all which, he was assured, were leading traits in his views, and he ardently hoped they would, before his return, exert their usual influence over his character. But when he turned his eyes on the beautiful face of Julia, beaming with every attraction and winning grace, hope died within his breast; and he feared Carlmaine's perseverance in wishing to make so much loveliness his own.

In spite, however, of these intervening clouds, time passed swiftly by, and, being marked by Julia's presence, Selwyn still was happy; till the arrival of the me-

lancholy news respecting Lord Montrevor made it the duty, as well as the wish, of his daughter to seclude herself from all company. Julia of course shared the retirement and the affliction of her friend. Indeed she was most painfully alive to the sufferings of Lord Montrevor, who had ever treated her with marked kindness ; and still more to the dreadful affliction of her dear Lady Montrevor : but, in her tender and unremitting endeavours to soothe the grief of Caroline, she almost forgot her own sorrows on the occasion ; and the secret vexations she experienced at not being able to converse with Mr. Selwyn on the afflicting subject.

As soon as Lord Montrevor was able to be removed from the house that had been occupied by the infamous Vittoria, Mr. Byngham went into Devonshire for the purpose of fetching Miss Montrevor and Julia to town. In addition to the anxious wish of Lady Montrevor to have her daughter and her *protégée* with her,

other reasons operated powerfully in inducing her to remove them without delay from Mr. Huntley's; namely, the expected return of Sir Charles Benwell, and the approaching marriage of Lady Eleanor: on neither of which occasions Lady Montrevor would have liked the young people to have remained in the neighbourhood without her. Immediately on his arrival, Mr. Byngham repaired to the Parsonage; and, warmly thanking Mr. and Mrs. Huntley for their friendly hospitality, conveyed his niece and adopted daughter to his own residence, purposing to return to town in a few days.

Selwyn had experienced severe mortification on being deprived of all intercourse with Julia; and, however his reason might at another time have approved the motives urged by Mrs. Huntley, for encouraging the great retirement of the young ladies, under the present unhappy circumstances of the Montrevor family,

his heart loudly rebelled against the unnecessary seclusion.

When he learnt that Mr. Byngham was at the Parsonage, he bitterly lamented that he could not declare to him his attachment to Miss Lawrence, not doubting that it would be received with the greatest pleasure : but to this proceeding the confidence he had so unluckily extorted from his cousin was an insuperable impediment ; and he was unwillingly compelled to remain silent. He repaired, however, to Mr. Huntley's, in the hope of obtaining a sight of Julia, whom he had scarcely seen for nearly a fortnight, and of learning how long Mr. Byngham was likely to remain in Devonshire.

The latter had dined with the worthy family, and was on the point of taking leave, when Selwyn rode up. Miss Montrevor was already in the carriage, at the door, and Julia was following her ; but perceiving Selwyn, she stepped back,



and, colouring deeply with undisguised pleasure, said,—“ Oh! Mr. Selwyn, I was apprehensive we should not see you before we set off for town.”

Selwyn sprang from his horse, and, seizing her hand, as if to assist her into the carriage, gently detained her for a moment, while he said, in a low voice, and, with a look of mingled rapture and tenderness,—“ And did you wish to see me, Julia? If that is true, I am well repaid for past anxiety.”

Caroline, whose attention had been engaged by a servant to whom she was giving directions from the opposite window, now turned round, and, perceiving Selwyn, he could add no more ; but, while speaking to Miss Montrevor, he handed Julia into the carriage, who was in haste to ascend, to conceal the emotion excited by Selwyn's words, and still more by his manner. Mr. Byngham came also to the door, and, for a few minutes, the conversation became general ; after which Mr.

Bynham took his seat by the side of the ladies, and they drove away.

Never was a mind or countenance less formed for concealment than those of Julia Lawrence; and such was the present confused and agitated state of her spirits, that both Mr. Bynham and Caroline must inevitably have remarked her appearance, had not the one been intent upon hearing all the sad particulars relating to her father, which had been suppressed while in company; and the other studying to soften, in the best manner he was able, the melancholy relation.

Julia thus gained time to compose both her feelings and features; and, by degrees, lost even all remembrance of Selwyn; first in the painful sensations excited by Mr. Bynham's account of the melancholy event that had occurred in town; and, subsequently, in pleasure at being assured, not only of Lord Montrevor's recovery, but also that

dear Lady Montrevor had not suffered in her health, and was happy in the prospect of more domestic comfort than she had known for many years past.

While this affecting conversation lasted, all private, interested feelings were really suspended in the heart of Julia; who freely mingled tears of sincere affection with those of filial tenderness shed by her friend: but the first minute in which she found herself alone, she enjoyed the new delight of retracing in her memory the never-to-be-forgotten look of animated pleasure and sensibility with which Selwyn had uttered the few words in reply to her expression of surprise at his unexpected appearance. She repeated these words a hundred times; and though she could not—dare not—attach any distinct meaning to them, yet the well-recollected accents sounded in her pleased ear, and conveyed a charm to her mind never before experienced. One moment she ventured to believe that

Selwyn loved her ; and, judging from the generous warmth of her own disposition, she went on to conclude, that, if he really did so, she might indeed look forward to the most happy prospects. But subsequent reflections brought fears, which, though not strong enough to counterbalance the weight of youthful hope, yet considerably checked it. If Selwyn avowed the sentiments his manner so strongly led her to think he entertained, he must be informed of all that was known relative to her mother ; when, perhaps, those sentiments would change. Well, if such could be his conduct, she proudly thought she could resign, without a sigh, a man she should consider unworthy of her. Still, however, the new inmate of her heart triumphed over these gloomy, but passing, ideas ; and she enjoyed, in the delightful wanderings of her imagination, a mysterious kind of happiness ; which, she felt, would be diminished, perhaps wholly lost, were she to

attempt to analyse it herself, or describe to any one its causes or effects. Indeed, whenever she did begin an examination of her feelings, she experienced some mortification at being obliged to acknowledge, that all the return she had received from Selwyn, for the hasty progress her heart had made in affection, had been a few looks of admiration, and still fewer words of any particular interest. Having, then, really nothing to communicate as coming from him, she ingeniously persuaded herself, that it was on all accounts best to conceal her sentiments, till something more decided should occur.

And thus Julia, with her first lesson of love, seemed instinctively to receive that of concealment, to which she was prompted, partly by an indefinite kind of shame, and partly from pride, and the fear, that she might prove the dupe of her own wishes, and have to blush, at some future period, for her present weakness.

## CHAPTER X.

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“If you will work upon any man, you must either know his nature and passions, and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weaknesses and disadvantages, and so awe him.”

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BACON.

SHORT as was the late mentioned interview between Selwyn and Julia, the passion of the former gathered new strength from the meeting; and the unpremeditated sentence uttered by the latter vibrated to his very heart, as he watched the receding carriage with mingled sensations of tenderness and regret.

On the very evening after his return from Mr. Huntley's, Lady Maria Carlmaine communicated to him a letter she had received from her brother; which spoke in terms of admiration respecting Miss Laroche, a lady of very large for-

tune and ancient family, whom the Earl of Ashmore wished his son to marry. Her ladyship added, that her father was much pleased ; considering his commendations favorable to those wishes.—Selwyn received with much pleasure the confirmation of this news from the Earl ; who, entering without reserve on the subject, talked with so much confidence, that his nephew left his presence, anticipating the almost immediate removal of what he pleased himself with thinking was the greatest impediment to his happiness.

Selwyn arose the next morning, anxiously wishing that, ere night, the arrival of Lord Carlmaine might remove much of his anxiety. He had not yet quitted his apartment, when he was surprised by the voice of his cousin, requesting admission. In a moment all his feelings were in alarm and confusion. Lord Carlmaine did not, however, notice his agitation ; but, after the first hasty greetings, said

he must immediately enter on the subject nearest his heart, that he might arrange matters before he saw the Earl.

“ Well, here I am, Adolphus,” he continued, “ more desperately in love with the adorable Julia than ever, and determined to please myself at every hazard. I am aware, however, that a devilish deal of caution will be necessary to bring my father about, who, you know, has chosen his daughter-in-law ; and, unluckily, I fear Miss Laroche has done me the favour to take a fancy to the relationship : but, what is worse than all, I am so confoundedly in debt, that I dare not offer any opposition at present to the plans. I trust no one, during my absence, has been prowling upon my manor, or else you would have sent me word ; for I conceived, by giving you my confidence, I had put my interest into safe keeping : so I scarcely need ask, if Miss Lawrence has had any lovers. Though,” he proceeded, without even looking at Selwyn,



or waiting a reply, “the bustle there has been in the family has deprived her of all opportunity; unless she may have caught some of the Worcestershire swains: but then you would have heard something about it; so I will be easy. And I may acknowledge to you, that her reception of me this morning was well calculated to make me so.”

“This morning!” re-echoed Selwyn.

“Yes, this morning, coz; and, you must confess, I am the luckiest dog in the world. I arrived at L— so late, and so tired last night, that I determined to stop there; and, as I drove an hour ago past Mr. Byngham’s, who should bless my eyes but Julia, walking in the sun under the garden wall, by the side of the road. Whether I sprang from the window or the door, I know not; but I was in an instant by her side; had seized, nay kissed, her hand, before I could scarcely credit my happiness. Heaven! how handsome she looked! Hebe,

Venus, and all the tribe of goddesses, are mere dowdies to her. Then such charming surprise, becoming blushes, and well-affected resentment. Oh, Adolphus ! *you* cannot understand my happiness, while I gazed on her lovely face, and listened to the sweet sound of her voice."

"Was she alone?" asked Selwyn, with all the composure he could command.

"Not absolutely, though nearly as good. Miss Montrevor and she were drawing the sick child of Mr. Byngham's housekeeper in a little cart, to enjoy the morning sun. When I recollected myself, I directed some little gallantry towards Miss Montrevor, to make things rather even ; but, fortunately, the child claimed so much of her attention, that, for nearly five minutes, I had the liberty of saying what I pleased to her lovely friend, who has beautified most wonderfully during my absence. But now I must away to my father, who will expect to see me. Remember, Selwyn, my

happiness is in your hands. I must have Julia ; but it cannot be yet. You have your cue : all I wish from you is secrecy and discretion ; leave the rest to me. I shall persuade my father, I do not mean to oppose his wishes respecting Miss Laroche, but that I will positively not marry at present. Thus I shall gain time for all I desire : but mind, neither he nor any one must suspect my love for Miss Lawrence ; it is a delicate business, and must be brought to bear by degrees. In the mean time, my great comfort is in having a friend like you, in whom I can place my whole confidence."

With these words he quitted the room, leaving Selwyn so perplexed by contradictory feelings and ideas, that he had neither power nor wish to make any reply.

Selwyn was here indeed the victim of Lord Carlmaine's cunningly-devised stratagems, and the dupe of his own virtue. Of the incorrect morals and licentious inconstancy of his relation, he had no

doubt ; and of his treachery he had occasionally conceived strong suspicions : against these, reserve and cool investigation were thought sufficient securities. But, to disarm a rival, and make that rival even instrumental to his own disappointment, by an open assumed confidence, a feigned reliance on his honour and secrecy, and an affected, deceitful ignorance of his feelings and pretensions, was a subtle, refined dissimulation, for which the noble mind of Selwyn was wholly unprepared, and to which his generous nature fell an easy sacrifice.

He now awoke from what appeared the golden dream in which he had lately indulged. All his new-found arguments in favour of the sentiments he had encouraged, and the hope he had cherished of a return to his affection, were suddenly annihilated, and for ever. In vain his heart struggled to retain the opinion that Julia's looks had sanctioned the idea that he had ceased to be an object of in-

difference to her : the confidence, the happiness, of Carlmaine, was proof incontestible of the fallacy of those hopes. Yes, he had misconstrued (for he could not accuse her of intentional falsehood,) the natural expression of sweetness and sensibility of her countenance ; and, however she might be disposed to regard him as a friend, Carlmaine had found the sure road to her affection, and to Selwyn she was irrevocably lost.

While looking back upon all that had past, and recollecting the suspicions he had before entertained, he accused his own folly for blindly precipitating him into a state of mind so injurious to his peace. For some time he gave himself up to all the poignancy of disappointed affection ; till, at length, gathering courage more from necessity than reason, he began to consider the line of conduct he had to pursue under such trying circumstances.

When he reflected, as dispassionately as he was able, on these circumstances, he found there remained not a ray of hope for him. It was not possible Lord Carlmaine should so grossly deceive himself. No, his love was returned ; or, even if it were not so with all the ardour Selwyn would have required, yet the brilliant prospects opening before her had doubtless determined Julia. At any rate, honour, friendship, and every feeling of delicacy, called upon him to subdue those powerful sentiments which had lately formed the chief charm of his existence ; or, if that were not practicable, to bury them in the inmost privacy of his heart, till time should have worn away their traces.

In recollecting the several conversations he had held with Julia, he congratulated himself on never having, as he imagined, given her reason to think he sought to obtain her affections ; though

he felt conscious she must have read in his manner the great admiration he felt for her.

In these reflections Selwyn indulged a very pardonable sophistry: for, feeling convinced that his conversation had not betrayed his love, he forgot, or was not altogether sensible, that his truant nature had completely unfolded its inward workings by a look and manner, which, in force and expression, fully equalled the powers of the most eloquent language.

Convinced, however, that her happiness would always be of consequence to his own tranquillity, he endeavoured to hope it would be secured by an union with a man who, for obtaining her, had made sacrifices which, in Lord Carlmaine's opinion, were great indeed. Another subject of self-satisfaction was that, as Frederick had never suspected his attachment to his sister, a friendship which was lately become very agreeable to him, would suffer no interruption.

Had he been at liberty to follow the dictates of his feelings, painful as the subject was, he would have immediately conveyed to Lawrence news so calculated to give him pleasure; but the secrecy imposed prevented his doing so, and thus signed, in a manner, the death-warrant of his hopes.

He now felt a melancholy satisfaction that Julia was about to quit Devonshire. He must no longer view her as his fond heart had learnt to do; and he could not bear to look on her as the wife of Lord Carlmaine: therefore, he did not wish to see her again, till he had taught himself the difficult lesson of forgetting all on which his mind had loved to dwell during the latter part of his intercourse with Miss Lawrence.

Strong as was the natural understanding of Selwyn, and however considerable the command that reason generally gave him over his passions, he found all his exertions insufficient to enable him to



bear with resignation or philosophy this total overthrow of a plan of happiness he had so highly prized. But no alternative remained ; and, after above an hour spent in the agitation and reflections we have briefly described, he joined his uncle and family with a sufficient external appearance of composure to escape observation.

The conversation turned chiefly upon Lord Montrevor during breakfast ; and, when it was ended, Lord Ashmore proposed to his son that they should call on Mr. Byngham ; telling Selwyn that there was also room in the carriage for him. The latter excused himself ; while Lord Carlmaine gladly agreed to accompany his father, well pleased that Selwyn was not to be of the party.

After their departure, Selwyn mounted his horse ; and, having rode down to the beach, he threw the reins on the animal's neck, and proceeded slowly along the strand, living in memory the past over again, grieving at the present, and de-

spairing at the future. Fain would we leave him in better company than his own thoughts ; but it is necessary we should here explain Lord Carlmaine's conduct rather more clearly than he had chosen to do to his cousin.

Neither the convivial pleasures of Hibernia's court, nor the gilded attractions of the rich heiress, Miss Laroche, had power to efface the impression made on Carlmaine's mind, or rather his senses, by our heroine ; though he had so often started at the boldness of the project he had formed, that he was beginning to doubt whether it would not be wise to relinquish a pursuit so hazardous, when his sister, who was unacquainted with his partiality for Miss Lawrence, told him, by letter, that she suspected Selwyn was in love with Julia and endeavouring to gain her affections.

Fired by this intelligence, the truth of which Lady Maria's subsequent letters confirmed, Lord Carlmaine execrated

what he called the mean, dishonourable perfidy of his relation ; vowing to himself that, if he found Selwyn had indeed sought to supplant him, he would strain every nerve, and resort to the most desperate means, to revenge himself and foil him in his projects. With these feelings operating still more forcibly than his own love for Julia, he returned to England, resolving to watch him very narrowly, and for the present to conceal his suspicions.

The unexpected sight of Julia had added fresh fuel both to his love and his resentment ; for, while her beauty charmed him more than ever, he fancied, when the deep and hasty blush that had suffused her face on his first appearance had subsided, that he could perceive an unusual degree of reserve in her manner, really occasioned by the freedom of his address, but which he failed not to attribute to the good offices of Selwyn ; who

had, he ungenerously thought, spoken of him in a way he knew he deserved.

Julia was indeed much surprised at suddenly seeing Lord Carlmaine, and still more at the little ceremony with which (being thrown off his guard by the unexpected pleasure of the meeting,) he had attempted to kiss her hand. Vexed and agitated, as well as indignant that Caroline should have witnessed his familiarity, she turned haughtily away with marked displeasure; and, so far from giving him an opportunity of conversing with her, as he had told his cousin, she studiously avoided even looking at him, directing her whole attention, while he continued with them, to the child.

Lord Carlmaine re-ascended the carriage, mortified by her behaviour, though flattered in some degree by the agitation he had remarked his presence had occasioned; and which, accustomed as he was to general success on such occasions,

vanity and experience made him interpret favourably to his wishes. Though stung with jealous suspicions of Selwyn's insincerity, he still resolved to treat him with such appearance of confiding friendship, that he would not only render him ashamed to own the part he was acting, but induce him to relinquish his views respecting Julia ; which he (Carlmaine) could not believe very determined, considering the great disapprobation of her manners that he had always noticed in his sober relation.

With regard to Julia, Lord Carlmaine had now one point settled,—namely, that she should be his, were it by any means possible ; for, unused to any efforts of self-control, his passion had rapidly risen with the appearance of opposition, and he persuaded himself that she was absolutely necessary to his happiness. He had occasionally suspected, and his own corrupt practices, as well as the examples of his profligate associates, favoured such

suspicious, that these mysterious twins, of whom so little was known, had owed their birth to Mr. Byngham : but, if not, it was almost, in his opinion, evident that they were the offspring of some illegitimate connexion of a friend of his. This belief was highly propitious to his designs ; and, could he but succeed in acquiring that ascendancy over Julia's mind and affections which had on similar occasions befriended him, he should consider every obstacle as comparatively light.

He flattered himself he had laid a very promising foundation for his success before he was ordered to Ireland ; and his hopes were still buoyant, in spite of Selwyn, whom he expected to be able to drive off the field by convincing him, without appearing to know the state of his mind, that Julia's heart was already engaged. Pursuant to this plan, he artfully framed his conversation, in their late meeting, fully to answer this purpose ; and, being himself perfectly on his guard,

and, notwithstanding his apparently unembarrassed, unobserving manner, minutely attentive to every emotion and turn of his cousin's countenance, he read there nearly all he wished to know. He was afterwards confirmed in the suspicion that Selwyn had in truth been captivated by the charms of Julia, but that he was now struggling to suppress a sentiment which he doubtless considered imprudent or hopeless.

Though, then, Lord Carlmaine had at first accused him of perfidy, he now began to be re-assured, and felt he might safely trust to his honour the secret he had confided, and at the same time rely on the well-known delicacy of his feelings in regard to women; which, he was positive, would never permit his approaching Miss Lawrence even in thought, if he once believed that she encouraged or endured the addresses of any other man. Lord Carlmaine found no difficulty in strengthening this once-received opinion;

for, while he lost no opportunity of confidentially impressing Selwyn with the conviction that Julia secretly shared his sentiments, our reserved, but disconsolate, lover was himself now but too ready to believe what was most painful to him to hear.

Business had detained Mr. Byngham at home nearly a week longer than he intended, and during the whole of that time Selwyn had studiously avoided the house; excepting once, when common civility obliged him to call on his respected friend, with whom (having found him in the garden,) he walked about, and then departed without entering the house. He had daily resolved to quit Devonshire even before Julia left it, and seek in new scenes to divert his mind; but each succeeding day found him wanting resolution to leave a spot where he had lately known so much happiness.

Added to this, he had promised Lady Eleanor to attend the celebration of her



nuptials : as soon as that event was over, he determined to go into Wales, where the chief of his property lay, and employ himself in some extensive improvements, which he had before meditated.

The day before that on which it was known Mr. Byngham was to set off for London, Selwyn had gone out for his usual solitary ride ; when, feeling an irresistible desire to see Julia once more, he suddenly rode to Mr. Byngham's. When he had entered the small pleasure-ground in which the house stood, a large party presented themselves immediately before him. Mr. Byngham and Mr. Huntley were walking together ; and at a little distance was a group, consisting of Miss Montrevor, Miss Huntley, Stephen Thornton, Lord Carlmaine, and Julia. Selwyn saw, however, only the two latter, who appeared in playful conversation ; while the animated features of Lord Carlmaine, and the blushing countenance of Julia, proclaimed loudly and painfully

to the heart of Selwyn the happy understanding that existed between them.

Gladly would he have retreated, but that was now impossible ; and, making an effort to conquer his feelings and summon all his presence of mind, he advanced with an external appearance of composure and self-possession. He even addressed some trifling remark to Julia at a moment when her attention did not seem wholly engrossed by his cousin. She started, and appeared somewhat agitated, when he first spoke to her ; but Lord Carlmaine, advancing at the moment, presented a carnation : she eagerly extended her hand to receive it, and Selwyn turned hastily to Miss Montrevor.

Julia and he were both afterwards more composed ; and, at the termination of his visit, Selwyn, now fully convinced that he had not the slightest chance, resolutely determined to use every means prompted by reason and prudence to erase from his mind sentiments and

wishes to which he had yielded with such hasty indiscretion : and a very short time saw him fulfilling the duties of an affluent station, by employing the labouring poor, administering to the wants of the distressed in his neighbourhood, and embellishing the seat of his ancestors, to which his father had been most partial.

## CHAPTER XI.

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——— “What means this stupid weakness  
That hangs upon me? Hence unworthy tears!  
Disgrace my cheek no more! No more, my heart,  
For one so coolly false, or meanly fickle,—  
O! it imports not which,—dare to suggest  
The least excuse!”

THOMSON.

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HITHERTO a protecting power had not only sheltered our heroine from the ills of life, strewn her way with flowers, and supplied her with friends to fill up the melancholy chasm her infancy had known; but blessed her with those rarest gifts, an ever grateful heart, framed to appreciate and enjoy those blessings; and a virtuous disposition to turn them to the best account. But now a fatality seemed to lower over her, and a malignant spell to encircle her. The beauty of her person and the ingenuous charms of her mind had excited affection in a

heart worthy of all the tenderest feelings of her own ; which latter, yielding with modest pleasure to the delight of so enviable a conquest, had now staked all its hopes of happiness on Selwyn's love.

She more than *thought*, she *felt* he loved her ; and, though natural delicacy as well as newly acquired discretion had taught her for the present to confine this conviction to her own bosom, it glowed at her heart, sparkled in her eyes, and shed a bright expression of undefinable satisfaction over her countenance and manner. These pleasing effects, not even the unwelcome return of Lord Carlmaine could cloud beyond the moments in which his presence (by recalling to her memory an imprudence, of which she wished never to be reminded,) had covered her with conscious confusion.

The few words we recorded some pages back, as uttered by Selwyn, furnished Julia with much agreeable subject of reflection ; but, when several days had

elapsed, and he made no attempt to see her, she experienced the first pang of anxious love. Restlessness and nameless fears assailed her, and her heart grew sick with hope so often disappointed. At last she heard he was in the garden with Mr. Byngham, and she repaired to a window from whence she could watch his approach to the house: but she watched in vain. She saw them shake hands, and separate, and with breathless consternation she finally beheld Selwyn mount his horse, and ride off the premises, without casting one look at the house; or, as she began to believe, probably without one thought on the foolish girl, whose heart was at that moment beating almost audibly with agitation and surprise at his unaccountable behaviour.

As long as Selwyn's receding form retained the least distinctness, her straining eye-balls pursued him; and, when the last trace of him was lost, she hastily

quitted the window, and, yielding to all the woman in her nature, gave unrestrained way to tears of bitter affliction, impatient sorrow, and deeply wounded pride. The latter, after a time, assumed a temporary triumph; and, rising from the sofa, on which she had sunk, she wiped the tears from her cheeks, and, summoning up all the native energy of her mind, resolved to check a grief, the object of which was as undeserving as he would doubtless be regardless, could he witness it. Conscious this time, that towards Selwyn, not only her conduct, but even her thoughts, had been blameless, (unless he had discovered her weak partiality for him, and condemned it, as she now did herself,) she boldly challenged the testimony of her heart, where, alas! love, hasty inconsiderate love, appeared now her sole error.

That heart, enthusiastic in every feeling, had indeed yielded with characteristic ardour to the impulse of a virtuous at-

tachment, in return for what she had too easily concluded was a congenial sentiment ; and, had the sweet delusion continued, the pure flame thus kindled would have burned with lasting and increasing warmth. But this strange apparent inconsistency of Selwyn's conduct, threatened roughly to smother, if not totally extinguish it. One of the leading features in Julia's character, as we have before remarked, was a pride of conscious integrity, which led her sometimes to aim at a self-complacency and happiness, independent of the opinion of others, and even of external objects.

By many and strenuous exertions, she at length succeeded in suppressing the tender sentiments she had felt for Selwyn ; and, governed by the suggestions of mortified pride and vanity, she at length persuaded herself, that the late object of her regard was now one of perfect indifference, if not of contempt. Stimulated by these and similar feelings, and more stung



by resentment than she allowed herself to believe, she wished for an opportunity of convincing Selwyn of her insensibility to his change of manner.

This opportunity, so blindly wished for, came much too soon for Julia's interest. She had noticed him the instant he entered Mr. Byngham's lawn; and every agitated feeling gave a contradiction to her boasted insensibility. Conscious her ever treacherous countenance was not to be trusted, as he approached she turned hastily round, and, Lord Carlmaine being immediately near her, she thoughtlessly entered into a conversation, marked by a forced vivacity, as well to conceal from observation the appearance of her emotion, as to conquer the reality of it. When Selwyn spoke to her, again her heart was in alarm, and tears of tenderness and vexation swam in her eyes at the sound of his voice, while her own was almost choked by the

contending sensations under which she laboured.

Had her eyes, and his observing softening looks, at that moment met, each might have discovered cause for satisfaction: but her evil genius hovered near, in the form of Lord Carlmaine; who, attentive to every passing movement, however trifling, sought to check the increasing agitation of Julia, which was as evident as displeasing to him. He plucked a flower from a neighbouring green-house; and, before he had scarcely time to present it, she seized the flower with nervous agitation, wholly unconscious of all the consequences that might result from that and other unguarded acts; anxious only to do or say any thing that could afford a momentary relief to feelings that so greatly distressed her.

Julia gladly embraced the first opportunity to gain the privacy of her own chamber; where, having freely indulged

the sensations with which her heart was struggling, she again summoned wounded pride to aid her in conquering a weak regard for a man, whose looks and manners had so greatly deceived her; who had from caprice changed his mind, or was alienated by an habitual captiousness, which neither reason nor caution could cure or prevent. Finally, she reflected that, in either case, his affection for her—if, indeed, he ever had any,—was very slight and unconfirmed; and to cherish a tender regard for him would be weak and degrading. She therefore hastily dried her eyes; resolving never again to moisten them with tears of regret for one with whom, she now wished to persuade herself, she would have had but a small chance of happiness.

Julia was not yet so versed in the art of concealment, as to be able to disguise her feelings, and prevent Caroline's suspicions. The observations of the latter had excited a belief of Selwyn's attach-

ment ; which she imparted to Julia ; and, from the manner in which her questions had been answered, she was inclined to think the sentiment reciprocal. Lately, however, Selwyn's conduct had contradicted that idea ; and when Caroline would now gaily have treated it as a lover's quarrel, Julia seemed alternately so distressed, mortified, and indignant, that Miss Montrevor affectionately told her, she would think just what she wished she should do on the subject ; adding, “ When our kind mother, my dear Julia, has an opportunity of talking the matter over with you, she will set all things in a proper point of view.”

Julia, with momentary haughtiness, said, indeed she had nothing to communicate to Lady Montrevor : but the next minute, with tearful eyes, she affectionately embraced Caroline, saying,—“ Oh ! yes, I shall doubtless tell her, I have been extremely foolish : but it was only for a short time ; and she will not, I know, re-

prove me very severely, when she learns how much I blame myself."

She then endeavoured to treat the subject with playful vivacity, adding,—  
"Do not, however, my dear Caro, fancy my case desperate; for, trust me, my pride is more wounded than my heart: so I shall soon be cured. I was a novice in these matters, and easily deceived, both in respect to Selwyn and myself; happily, we neither of us were in love, and when we meet again it will doubtless be as good friends."

After this conversation, Caroline, partly imposed on, and willing to spare the feelings of Julia, recurred to the topic no more; and the next day they left Devonshire.

To Selwyn, trifling as was the incident of the carnation, it proved conclusive; and he mournfully withdrew from the unequal contest. To Carlmaine the same circumstance was a decided triumph; for though he was not, like his cousin,

the dupe of appearances, and though the next minute saw the fatal flower plucked to pieces by the hand of Julia, and its rejected blossoms bestrewing the ground, yet it had served him far beyond his most sanguine hopes ; and his penetration traced, beneath Selwyn's affected composure, the very sentiments with which he so much wished to inspire him ; Selwyn had seen it readily accepted, and had retired, before Julia, with true female caprice, had destroyed the gift, whose beauty she had appeared the moment before to prize.

Thus chance had most opportunely befriended Lord Carlmaine ; and he took leave of Mr. Byngham and the ladies, his bosom filled with love and doubts, but not despair. He was convinced, from recent observation, that Selwyn had succeeded in exciting the sensibility of Miss Lawrence ; and he glowed with jealous rage at the idea : but, Selwyn once removed, he flattered himself the

obstacles would be slight between his oft tried arts of persuasion, and a heart so easily moved, as Julia's now appeared. At the same time, he thought he knew the temper of Selwyn's mind sufficiently to feel assured that, after what he (Lord Carlmaine) had told him, and the observations he had himself been able to make,—which, though trifling in themselves, were, he well knew, great in the eye of love,—Selwyn would shun temptation, and never attempt to control a heart that was not decidedly his own.

This profligate young nobleman, well satisfied with the present aspect of affairs, resolved shortly to follow Julia to town; where he hoped he might be able to meet with opportunities favourable to the dark designs he had dared to form. Every minute he had spent with her strengthened her power over him; and, now that the pangs of jealousy were added to those of love, he even felt sometimes doubtful of the lengths to which

his infatuation might eventually lead him. His mind,—though, to all outward appearance, richly endowed and highly cultivated,—was, in some degree naturally, but more from early depraved habits, a stranger to the feelings of a virtuous attachment, and all the refinements and delicacy of the very passion to which he had long been the voluntary slave. Women he had accustomed himself to consider closely, only in two points of view. One as they might administer to his fickle, guilty passions: the other, as a convenient means of mending his already broken fortune, and of enabling him to maintain that station in society which was threatened by his accumulating debts, his failing credit, and the Earl's well known moderate fortune.

Lord Carlmaine's character was certainly involved in very little mystery; and his motives of action were sufficiently simple. He was, in reality, a refined sensualist; practised without



scruple upon the weakness and unsuspecting confidence of his companions ; could assume, occasionally, the mask of disinterested friendship, or of faithful love, as best favored the pursuits of his vain and vicious pleasures. Self-gratification was the object of his life ; corrupted, and engrossed, his mind : whatever were the means, this was the end. Here he was uniform and consistent ; in every thing else, uncertain and changeable : a votary at the altar of fashion ; the slave of the passing hour.

Lord Ashmore was well aware of the very expensive habits of his son ; and was, consequently, desirous that he should form some matrimonial alliance, which would improve his fortune, and, at the same time, lead him to a more settled mode of life. With these views, when Lord Carlmaine went to Ireland, his father urged him strongly to renew his acquaintance with Miss Laroche, the rich heiress of an Irish gentleman, with whom

Lord Ashmore had formerly been very intimate ; and who, dying, had left his daughter sole mistress of herself, and ten thousand a-year.

This lady, now in her five-and-twentieth year, was remarkably plain, with the rare good sense to know herself, and fully to understand the dangerous situation in which she was placed. Indeed, in refusing her beauty, Nature seemed only not to have crowned her work with perfection ; as Miss Laroche possessed every mental and desirable advantage. When Lord Carlmaine appeared in the gay circles of Dublin, she had not seen him for many years. Their acquaintance was renewed ; during which the inconsiderate Hibernian became so much pleased with the really attractive Carlmaine, that she secretly resolved to marry him, or remain single for ever.

The latter soon became sensible of the flattering distinction, and was more than once tempted to avail himself of his good

fortune; but, whenever he seriously endeavoured to think on the subject, he shrunk from the magnitude of the sacrifice by which he, who had been almost from his boyish days the very slave of beauty, would be chained in the prime of life to a woman, who, to his fastidious eye and taste, appeared a monster of ugliness. The attractions of grace and loveliness were all Lord Carlmaine had ever sought or wished to find in woman. Miss Laroche's sense and accomplishments had therefore no charms for him; and when he extolled them to his father or others, it was artfully to please the former, or propitiate the minds of his friends and acquaintance, in case his necessities should induce, or rather force, him to accept her hand and fortune. With the same prudent foresight, he regulated his behaviour towards the lady; treating her with sufficient attention to enable him, at some future time, to render it more decided, if convenient. At

present his thoughts were too full of Julia to bear the idea of Miss Laroche ; with whom, he was disposed to believe, he might succeed whenever he chose. Without therefore committing himself, or wholly destroying her expectations, he left Ireland ; and gratified the Earl by professing much esteem for Miss Laroche, and admiration of her talents ; but at the same time requesting his patient indulgence, till he could bring his mind to marry a woman, who was so totally destitute of all personal attractions.

Pleased with this prospect, though not immediate, of his son's compliance with his wishes, Lord Ashmore promised not to urge the matter further for the present, though he suggested the fear that Miss Laroche might save him the trouble of making up his mind, by favouring the pretensions of some man less difficult to please. Lord Carlmaine, by an exaggerated confidence in the lady's favourable disposition towards him, diminished his

father's apprehensions ; and the subject was dismissed.

Lord Carlmaine very freely talked to his sister of Miss Laroche, though he carefully avoided every allusion to his passion for Julia ; whom he always affected to treat and speak of as a pretty, giddy girl ; who, to use his own phrase, required strict and watchful care. Of Selwyn, too, they often discoursed ; when Lady Maria, to justify the opinion she had formed of her cousin's attachment to Julia, entered into many particulars of his daily attention to her, while she and Miss Montrevor were guests at the Parsonage.

These minute details heightened Carlmaine's resentful jealousy ; but, thinking he should gain more by suppressing, than yielding to it, he made an effort to control his feelings, and remain satisfied with having, in his turn, completely duped his cautious relation ; who, whatever might occur, had, he conceived,

forfeited all right to complain ; since, by his duplicity and breach of trust, he had first destroyed all confidence, and outraged every sentiment of friendship. Lady Maria accounted for Selwyn's apparent change of sentiments, by supposing he had fortunately discovered how unfitted Miss Lawrence was to assimilate with a character like his ; and had prudently determined to proceed no farther.

The time which Lord Carlmaine thought it necessary, for his interest, to remain in Devonshire, would have now weighed intolerably on his hands, but for the amusement he derived from an almost daily intercourse at Dr. Thornton's, where he was ever received as a favoured guest by Mrs. Thornton ; to whose maternal fondness it did not appear aspiring at all too high, to wish to place a coronet upon the brows of either of her daughters. For some time she entertained the hope, that Miss Thornton was

the magnet which so constantly drew his lordship to the rectory; but this idea she was unwillingly obliged to relinquish, and content herself with the prospect of seeing Jessy Countess of Ashmore.

Had no other consequences ensued, good Mrs. Thornton's having one more disappointment in the matrimonial baseless fabrics, she was in the habit of erecting for her daughters, would not have much signified; but Jessy also, unfortunately, had suffered her imagination of late to run rather wild in the regions of titles, equipages, and coronets. Particular circumstances also rendered these airy visions singularly ill-timed and unlucky.

Some time previous to this period, Dr. Thornton had engaged, as curate, a young man of good family and connexions, but very slenderly provided for. Occupying a cottage belonging to the doctor, he was of course a frequent visitor at the rectory; and soon so effectually

recommended himself to the fair Jessy, that vows of love and constancy were mutually received and given, under the strictest seal of secrecy; both of them being well assured, that Emerson's disgrace and dismissal would be the immediate consequence of the discovery of an attachment, which the lady's family would never sanction.

For some time no unlucky occurrence happened, no suspicions arose; till, as is often the case, habitual good fortune inspired a false sense of security; and Jessy, emboldened by success, became less cautious; and, yielding to the entreaties of her lover, occasionally spent an hour with him in a neglected retired shed, formerly a tool-house, at a small distance from Emerson's cottage, which had been a gardener's house, before Mrs. Thornton's improvements.

Lord Carlmaine had called one evening on Emerson; but, not finding him at home, walked out in pursuit of him; and,



being overtaken by a heavy shower, he sought shelter in the above-mentioned shed ; and, suddenly arriving in front of this humble temple, surprised the lovers.

The reader will easily conceive the astonishment and confusion of the poor girl, and the awkward embarrassment of young Emerson. Lord Carlmaine apologized, with good-humoured and significant smiles, for his intrusion ; while he forcibly retained Jessy, who, though it poured with rain, was anxious to escape. The instant she could regain her liberty, and the rain had a little ceased, she hastened home, overwhelmed with self-reproaches ; not so much excited by a sense of her imprudence, as by the discovery of it.

Emerson found all the fellow feeling he could desire, and the assurance of secrecy from Lord Carlmaine ; who, after recommending him to be more circumspect in future, left him. In his way

home, his lordship was accompanied by the image of the youthful, trembling Jessy, struggling to escape his hold, and conceal from him emotions so strongly painted in her blushing countenance; and, though she had never before but slightly attracted his notice, she now appeared to him a very pleasing girl.

From that day he frequently seized opportunities of privately conversing with her; first on her love for Emerson, then by degrees on her own attractions, and her lover's good fortune; till he had wholly conquered her timidity, and established between her and himself an entire confidence. So circumstanced, it was easy for him to secure her silence respecting the share he and Miss Lawrence had in the memorable meeting of Sir Charles Benwell and Mr. Fairbank, at Arlingham. Lord Carlmaine's subsequent departure for Ireland interrupted this intimacy; but, on his late return, he

was glad to renew it, in self-defence against the cruel *ennui* that threatened him.

He found the loves of Emerson and Jessy still flourishing under the genial shade of mystery and concealment, and easily resumed his former tone with the lady; who, grateful for the friendly interest he appeared to take in her situation, attempted not to check his insidious advances, or the easy familiarity of his manners, particularly as his treatment of Emerson was of the most encouraging kind. Indeed, his lordship had not confined himself to unmeaning professions of friendship; but had actually obtained from his father for him, the promise of succeeding to a small living on a vacancy that could not be far distant.

On the strength of this, to all appearance, generous act, Lord Carlmaine thought he might venture to be still more pointed in his attentions to Jessy; who, though she had readily received the

addresses of Emerson, and was really attached to him, yet not being of a very steady character, she gradually became sensible to the flattering assiduity of a man like Lord Carlmaine. She also soon listened with pleasure to the insinuations of her mother, as to the conquest she had made, and her instructions for securing it; till vanity and ambition drove the poor curate from her thoughts.

Lord Carlmaine, who, it will be readily believed, had shared no part of the mother's and daughter's speculations, conceiving at length that he had succeeded in disposing the mind of the simple girl to his wishes, availed himself of a favourable opportunity to hazard the disclosure of them. This he did with so much art and circumlocution; intermixing his proposals and solicitations with so many commendations of Emerson, and professions of friendly intentions towards both him and her, that it was long before Jessy could comprehend his

meaning. At last, however, all doubt was removed ; and shocked, surprised, and humbled, she abruptly quitted him, and meeting with Emerson, while her heart was yet smarting under the insult to which her own misconduct and indiscretion had exposed her, she literally fell at his feet, and, with tears of contrition, anger, and returning love, confessed her own errors, and Lord Carlmaine's villainy.

Emerson, who had severely felt the late change in her manner, now hastily and affectionately raised and pressed her to his heart. A reception so kind sensibly affected the agitated Jessy : and her lover, profiting by her emotion, had no difficulty in prevailing on her to consent to an immediate elopement ; which would secure to her a protector, in the man to whom her happiness, through life, would be dearer than his own. Once married, the indulgent doctor would, no doubt, receive them with kindness ; her mother,

however disappointed, must submit to what was past remedy; and Lord Carlmaine (whom it was their interest not to offend,) would of course be glad never to have his late conversation remembered; in which Emerson wished to persuade himself, as well as Jessy, that she had misconstrued too seriously some of the unmeaning expressions of gallantry in which his lordship was in the habit of indulging.

Preliminary arrangements between the lovers were very soon adjusted; and late the following night, Miss Jessy Thornton, for whom her mother was in idea preparing wedding robes becoming the bride of Brookdale's heir, privately quitted the paternal roof; where, in due time, a most dutiful epistle, signed by Thomas and Jessy Emerson, was received.

After a proper degree of surprise, displeasure, and resentment, had been evinced, forgiveness followed, and the happy pair returned to complete the

honey moon at the rectory. There Lord Carlmaine accompanied his father and sister, to pay the bridal compliments ; and, though at his entrance Emerson looked rather grave, and his wife much more confused, yet the easy grace and cheerful unconcern of his manners soon removed all embarrassment from both, and nothing unpleasant seemed to be remembered.

## CHAPTER XII.

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“O, Woman! in our hours of ease,  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
And variable as the shade  
By the light quivering aspen made;  
When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
A ministering angel thou!” SCOTT.

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WHILE journeying to town, Julia truly pleaded a slight indisposition, as an excuse for the absence of that vivacity which she felt wholly unable to command. Mr. Byngham and Caroline's affectionate sympathy, with the exertion of her own reason, and the suggestions arising from her natural character, operated however so successfully on her mind, that, by the time they reached Grosvenor Street, her late disappointment was much softened, and the idea of Selwyn less exclusively filled her mind.



The meeting between Lord and Lady Montrevor and their daughter was affecting in the highest degree; and, if the former experienced any mixture of humiliation and self-reproach at the sight of his long neglected child, her tender caresses soon calmed his agitated spirits. As he pressed her to his heart, he promised never again voluntarily to give her a moment's uneasiness; and to leave all future arrangements for her happiness to her own wishes, and her mother's judgment. The natural goodness of his disposition, long smothered by contagious examples, and perverted by the cravings of vicious passions, now shewed itself; and, in the full returning tide of benevolence and virtuous regrets, he eagerly sought to atone, by his present affection, for his past indifference. Caroline shed tears of tenderness and gratitude on the hand of her father; while Lady Montrevor looked on with eyes radiant with joy and sensibility.

Of scenes like these our heroine was no uninterested spectator. Rich in all the amiable sympathies of the soul, to witness the joys and sorrows of those she loved was ever with her amply to share them. She was much shocked at the alteration illness, and his wound, had produced in Lord Montrevor's appearance; as had the effects of anxiety and unremitting attendance on her husband, on the delicate frame of Lady Montrevor.

But when she read in the countenances and altered manners of both towards each other, the revival of connubial happiness; and when she received from Ursula, who had heard from Mr. Brown, who had been told it by Vittoria's servant,—the whole account of what had happened, she clapped her hands for joy, clasped her old friend round the neck, blessed the importunate creditors, the friendly bullet, and almost Vittoria herself, as instruments in the restoration of peace and pleasure to her benefactress.

By Lord and Lady Montrevor, Julia was received as another daughter ; and she almost lost or discarded all her own minor causes of disquiet : of which she felt quite ashamed, when comparing them with the awful, and still visible, effects of the misguided passions, misery, and despair, which had lately reigned, and caused such devastation in the beings before her.

Sensible how often, not only in the days of health, but in the hours of gloomy discontent, she had, with playful solicitation, succeeded in drawing Lord Montrevor from his own reflections, she now summoned all her powers of entertainment ; and, establishing herself near his couch, smiling, declared she was clerk of the cushions and footstools ; and requested to be employed as first, second, or third nurse, as occasion required. She proudly boasted an irresistible charm in the art of reading or singing, by which she could always procure sleep for her

friends ; calling on Ursula to vouch for the truth of her professions, by declaring how often her art had been called into practice for her relief, when suffering under frequent and painful rheumatic attacks. Thus did this child of nature beguile the hours of pain and languor; and, by the most attentive kindness, as well as the most delicate good breeding, endeavoured to reconcile Lord Montrevor to himself.

The society of his daughter and Julia proved, indeed, a most desirable acquisition to him ; the slow amendment of his health became more visible and certain, when his mind was frequently drawn off from its own concerns, by the affectionate assiduity of Caroline, or amused and gratified by the sprightly conversation of her friend. Lady Montrevor also experienced great delight in this re-union of her family. She had stood

———“ As stands a lovely tree,  
That still unbroke, though gently bent,  
Still waves with fond fidelity  
Its boughs above a monument.”

Her gentle spirits, supported as they were by promised happiness, had yet occasionally almost sunk beneath her exertions: but now her care and anxiety on various subjects were considerably lessened.

Happily, too, for Julia, so many and dear claims had offered themselves to her attention, and her time had been so fully employed, that she had found no leisure to dwell on her late cause of uneasiness; a circumstance highly favourable to the return of her tranquillity.

Indeed, while gifted by heaven with a benevolent disposition and a sensibility that rendered her capable of the most warm and lasting attachment, Nature had happily blended in her character such a delightful portion of animal spirits, and genuine, innocent, cheerfulness, that she was enabled to struggle with considerable success against the inroads of real and continued affliction.

Miss Montrevor, with true delicacy,

had refrained from mentioning any particulars relative to Selwyn to her mother; which Julia understanding, determined herself to enter on the subject with Lady Montrevor.

“Abash’d, she blush’d, and with disorder spoke;  
Her rising shame adorn’d the words it broke.”

“So, my dear madam, Caroline has not made you acquainted with my—what shall I call it?—silly and mortifying mistake; in which she ought, in truth, to acknowledge having greatly encouraged me. Indeed I believe she thought, much more seriously than I did, that Mr. Selwyn was partial—I mean attentive, to me.”

“I believe I did,” said Caroline; “and so I do still; though, for some reason or other, he seems to have changed his mind.”

She then related several instances of, what had appeared to her, his very pointed attention to her friend; but as, when closely examined, Julia scarcely recollected a single word he had ever said to

her expressive of more than friendly interest; and, as she could not condescend to describe his looks and manners towards her, Lady Montrevor prudently observed, that Selwyn had most likely never entertained the idea of recommending himself more particularly than Lord Carlmaine, Edward, or any other young man, would naturally do to such a sweet girl as Julia; whose burning cheek she affectionately kissed, saying, with the kind view of reconciling her to herself,—  
“And do not fancy, my love, that Caroline is the only person deceived on this subject; as, in several letters I have received from Devonshire, I have been informed that Mr. Selwyn appeared disposed to attach himself to you, and then suddenly to avoid you. I did not enter on this topic with you; well knowing, from the ingenuousness of your temper, that I should know, in your own good time, all that was necessary, or of consequence. One thing, I am most happy in

observing, is, that you have fortitude and good sense enough to prevent this little occurrence from making any uneasy impression on your mind."

Julia coloured deeply, but answered at the instant,—“Oh no, thank heaven! I am not heart-stricken: Mr. Selwyn has my free permission to carry his attentions wherever he pleases; for I am sure he and I should never have suited each other."

Our artless heroine fancied at the moment that she entirely felt what she said; but afterwards, in the solitude of her own reflections, she was compelled to acknowledge, that so truly stricken was her heart, as to prevent any man from ever again possessing the same power over it which Selwyn had exercised.

That power, however, was daily diminishing, and even her natural candour could not suggest the propriety of needlessly covering herself with confusion, by confessing she had for a short time



weakly entertained so favourable a disposition for a man, who had bestowed so little time and care in seeking her regard.

On questioning her daughter more particularly on this subject, Lady Montrevor was led to believe, that Selwyn had probably experienced a temporary inclination towards the lovely Julia ; but that subsequent reflections on the great dissimilarity of their characters, had induced him to forego his wishes, and remove from temptation : a line of conduct very consistent with her opinion of his character. In spite of Julia's affected unconcern, her ladyship perceived she had suffered some disappointment on this occasion ; but still she was glad to believe it was not of a very serious nature.

Lady Montrevor was much inclined to blame Selwyn for having given colour to the ideas and reports in question ; as she could not believe he had entertained serious thoughts of Julia as a wife, having frequently thought her manners and

disposition by no means accorded with his taste. It was certainly a match of all others she and Mr. Byngham would have eagerly wished for their young favourite ; but, when discoursing on the subject, they were both of opinion, that, if Selwyn had really formed such a wish, (which to them seemed still doubtful,) it was perhaps best that he should have proceeded no farther ; as it did not appear that their respective characters and tempers were calculated to promote mutual happiness : one being all warmth, impatience, and vivacity ; and the other the extreme of caution, reflection, and seriousness.

This little incident, slight as its effects promised to be on Julia, seemed still more to endear her to the hearts of her friends ; and they endeavoured, by increased marks of their partiality, to remove, without the appearance of design, every shade of the cloud which they saw had not passed over her with-

out shedding some little of its baneful influence. Julia, ever feelingly alive to testimonies of kindness, quickly noticed the tendency of their attentions; and, fully comprehending the delicacy of the proceeding, gratefully exerted herself to prove to them, that their endeavours were successful.

These efforts brought their own reward; and, without philosophising, taught one of the most useful lessons of philosophy, viz. by giving an instance of that self-correcting power, which the human mind possesses, when it wisely resolves to reform the errors of its judgment, and reclaim the wanderings of its imagination. Julia therefore soon learnt, if not to forget Selwyn, at least to think of him with lessening uneasiness and regret.

Lord Montrevor now daily approached to health and strength of body, and serenity of mind; and, though still not sufficiently recovered to quit London

and his medical advisers, yet he was well enough, in a few weeks after his daughter's arrival, to admit some particular friends ; among whom was Lord Ashmore's family, now in town, partly for the friendly purpose of seeing their neighbours,—who, it appeared, would not, for a considerable time, be able to return to Devonshire ; and partly to obtain medical opinion for the Earl, who had been alarmed by the apprehension of gout in his stomach. Lady Montrevor was pleased with the attention her daughter and Julia received from Lady Maria ; who, with all her unprepossessing singularities, had ever, from childhood, found an indulgent friend in the mistress of Arlingham.

Lord Carlmaine rejoiced in the opportunities he now had,—in the unceremonious visits which were thus, for the amusement of the invalid, allowed him,—of contemplating the unadorned beauty and unaffected charms displayed by Julia

in her attendance on Lord Montrevor. Edward Byngham and Frederick soon also, on leaving Oxford, joined the party ; and thus a most desirable society was formed, in which Julia regained much of her suspended vivacity ; though there were still many moments, when the wish of an addition of *one more* to their society agitated her bosom.

How greatly would that agitation have been increased, and its character altered, could she have beheld that one at this period, and possessed the power of penetrating his thoughts. There she would have seen her image enthroned, in spite of reason, prudence, and even jealousy. Her pride would have been gratified, her resentment appeased, her fears allayed, and every gentle feeling awakened, could she have witnessed the contending emotions of his mind ; in which, after many a fruitless struggle, love,—unfading, hopeless love,—remained triumphant over all. The reason and philosophy of Selwyn's

character now only served to control his actions; his thoughts and wishes were yielded up to a passion ardent as unpropitious.

Convinced, by all that he had heard, and the little he had himself seen, that he had been deceived in thinking he had succeeded in interesting the heart of Julia, which he had no doubt would in time, if not immediately, reward the love of Lord Carlmaine; he sought only to teach his own resignation, for to forget her, he felt, would be impossible. Nor could he blame her. She knew not how inexpressibly dear she was to him. First his weak indecision, and then his rash folly, had been the fatal obstacles that had prevented his openly declaring his sentiments at a time when he might have reasonably hoped for success. But, so inconsistently guarded had his conduct been, that she could scarcely have suspected his love for her; consequently, was not likely to return it.

Indeed, so perverse and undefined had been his sentiments, that not till every sense of honor and propriety had peremptorily forbidden the prosecution of his wishes, he had positively ascertained what those wishes were. His reproaches were therefore directed against himself; and all he could now do was to confine strictly within the sorrowful precincts of his own bosom, feelings with which he found it would, at least at present, be in vain to struggle. He could no longer entertain a doubt of the honor of Lord Carlmaine's intentions, but still he had many of his constancy and ability to constitute the happiness of any woman; and Selwyn felt many fears for that of Julia. The news of his cousin's arrival in London had reached him, as well as his frequent visits in Grosvenor-street: restless, therefore, and unhappy, he suddenly resolved also to go to town; and, exerting a manly dominion over his private feelings, to see Julia, and form, from

his own observation, a just estimate of the chance she had of being happy in an union with Lord Carlmaine.

His unexpected appearance at first greatly disconcerted his relation; who, being however, for many reasons, unwilling openly to quarrel with him, readily embraced the only alternative, and received him with every demonstration of friendly confidence; described his passion for Julia as increased, and himself perfectly satisfied with the progress he had reason to believe he was making in the affection of the lady.

“Still however, Adolphus,” he continued, “secrecy is more than ever indispensable. My father has lately not been so well as usual; and, fancying he may not last long, he is become more anxious for me to marry; and, on my again expressing a wish for delay, I discovered that some officious body had suggested to him the probability of my being attached to Miss Lawrence. He then



vowed that, if he thought me capable of such an imprudent, degrading choice, he would deprive me of all it was in his power to detach from the title ; adding, that my aunt would, no doubt, shew her indignation in a similar way. On this I was obliged to equivocate, and assure him I had no intention of forming any engagement without his approbation ; and promised that, when I returned to my regiment, I would seriously think of Miss Laroche. Aye, Selwyn, you have reason to shake your head, I grant. But what could I do ? My father was ill and exasperated ; and it was absolutely necessary, for his peace and my happiness, to deceive him. Who knows what may happen ? The physicians do not think well of him ; and, should he die, I shall have spared him, by a little duplicity, much uneasiness, to say nothing of all I had myself at stake."

"And does Miss Lawrence," asked

Selwyn, "know your father's sentiments respecting her?"

"No, not to their full extent," answered the wily Carlmaine: "though we perfectly understand each other; and she kindly submits to circumstances, which she is persuaded I cannot at present alter. I am extremely guarded in my attentions to her, lest any of her friends or mine should be led to form conjectures, that might confirm the suspicions which the Earl already entertains."

Much more conversation passed between them; and Lord Carlmaine, being determined, at every risk, to destroy any latent hopes that still might linger in the heart of his cousin, stopped at no falsehood respecting Julia's sentiments, or his own intentions, which seemed likely to further his views. He strongly reiterated his injunctions of secrecy, and resolutely opposed Selwyn's proposal, that Frederick, at least, should be made

acquainted with particulars which so highly interested his sister. His cousin, however, affected to treat young Lawrence as a boy ; who, naturally delighted with the communication, would not fail, by some imprudence, to divulge it, or at least create suspicions.

As Selwyn still continued to represent the propriety of thus far extending his confidence, pledging his honor for Frederick's discretion, Lord Carlmaine exclaimed, with anger,—“Urge me no farther : I am best acquainted with my own concerns ; and am sorry if the confidence you sought is irksome to you, and I would fain relieve you of the burden. But hark ye, Selwyn, the case stands thus :—you must either prove to me, by a solemn promise of continued secrecy and discretion, that I may rely on your honor and friendship ; or else I shall feel convinced, that you have some concealed reason for being my enemy, and forfeiting the word and character of an honor-

able man ; and I shall treat you henceforward accordingly."

Conscience lent an edge to Lord Carlmaine's words which they would otherwise never have possessed ; and Selwyn's generous nature and proud integrity, that would on every other occasion have spurned the base insinuation with haughty resentment, were silenced. Love, which at this moment appeared almost guilty in his eyes, had made him a coward ; and, after a faint attempt to repel the insinuation by raillery, he gave, unequivocally, the assurance required by Lord Carlmaine ; who, satisfied with having thus artfully encircled his cousin in his toils, shook him cordially by the hand, and begged his pardon, for having a moment doubted the sincerity of his friendship ; urging the unsettled state of his mind as his excuse.

It may perhaps appear somewhat extraordinary, that the natural discernment of Selwyn, and his acquired knowledge

of mankind, should thus continue to be imposed on by a tissue of mean artifices, of which Lord Carlmaine might justly be suspected. But, for this unhappy effect, two latent and powerful causes may be assigned. In the first place, Selwyn's fears, operating with undue influence upon that diffidence and sensibility so peculiar to men of talent and genius, almost anticipated the success of his rival; and, in the next place, though not blind to a profligacy scarcely capable of concealment, nor receiving every profession with easy credulity, yet his noble, ingenuous heart, would have rebuked him, had he glanced in thought upon that wicked complication of meanness, falsehood, and cunning, which was so deliberately employed to undermine his happiness.

Selwyn then proceeded with Lord Carlmaine to Grosvenor Street, arming himself by the way with all the necessary fortitude and composure to behold Julia

only with friendly interest. She was on her side equally well prepared to see him ; having the day before heard of his arrival in town. For a moment she admitted the idea suggested by Caroline, that she possibly was the attraction that had drawn him to town ; but, fearful of being again deceived and humbled, she resolutely checked the hope but too ready to arise ; and determined that, whatever might be his sentiments, she would convince him, that she was neither so vain or silly as, probably, he had imagined.

So well had she tutored her heart and countenance for the occasion, that, when Selwyn was announced, a gentle fluttering, known only to herself, agitated the one, and only a quick passing blush overspread the other ; which had fortunately subsided before her turn arrived to be addressed by Selwyn. As he approached, their eyes encountered each other ; but female pride and prudent caution held their secret respective feelings

in such complete subjection, that the heart had no share in the looks of either.

Lord Carlmaine contrived to occupy a seat near Julia, (who still maintained her post close to the invalid); and though his behaviour had nothing in it sufficiently pointed to attract even her notice, or that of others, yet Selwyn not only saw in it the solicitude of a lover, but fancied he could distinctly perceive he was a favored one, in the mere common civility with which Julia occasionally repaid his attention,—often, indeed, to avoid directing her looks or conversation towards that part of the room where Selwyn sat; a belief that, while it pained him very sensibly, convinced him of the necessity of self-possession and resolution; which rising as his still lingering hopes farther receded, he got through the visit without being once disconcerted.

Julia also retired to her apartment at its conclusion, well satisfied with the appearance of indifference she had pre-

served; but with a heart oppressed with feelings she hoped she had conquered. The first grand trial was however over, and she would not seek to avoid him, as she had at first intended. Selwyn had given her a lesson upon which she would even improve. She would forget she had thought of him otherwise than as a man, whose worth and character she had learnt justly to appreciate; she would endeavour to resume her former easy manner with him; and, while she thus convinced him, that she neither sought nor prized his love, she would force him to esteem and respect her.

Poor Selwyn's secret reflections were not quite so satisfactory. Feeling that, while he could command his words and actions sufficiently to avoid betraying his own secret, or exciting the half-awakened suspicions of Lord Carlmaine, no sacrifice would be too great to enjoy the blessing of frequently seeing Julia, he resolved to remain near her; at least for



a time drink deep of the intoxicating draught, and bask in the sunshine of her presence.

Thus these victims of deceit and treachery continued frequently to meet: Julia endeavouring to persuade herself, that she should soon cease to feel the slightest concern for the altered manners of Selwyn, whatever might be the cause; while he, infatuated by misrepresentations and falsehood, saw only, in her lately assumed reserve towards him, or occasional attempts to renew those familiar conversations, in which he had often found the most seducing charms, a compliment to Lord Carlmaine; or the kind efforts of a heart, itself at ease, to soften the suspected grief of one less happy.

It was often almost more than Selwyn could endure with calmness to notice the ingenious artifices of Julia's affection to tempt Lord Montrevor's failing appetite; or to induce him to take an airing when

it was recommended, and he was unwilling to leave his couch ; or to see the ever ready and watchful attention that sought to prevent every wish, exclude the intruding sun, admit the reviving air, and smooth the tumbled pillow. Caroline was no less willing than herself to contribute to the comfort and ease of her still suffering father ; and Lady Montrevor lived almost to watch the looks of her beloved husband : but Julia, either from a quicker power of perception, or greater natural activity, was generally the first to perceive, or, on the slightest sign from Lady Montrevor, to execute, the service required.

As Selwyn gazed on this pattern of, perhaps, the sweetest part of female excellence, his rebel heart frequently beat with emotion so excessive, that he was obliged to end his visit. In such and similar situations Julia produced little less effect upon the mind of Lord Carlmaine ; who daily felt his love

assume a more serious character. Though still so wavering were his plans, alternately swayed by his passion and his interest, that he dared not yet approach her but in the doubtful phrase of respectful admiration. Had Julia's mind not been always pre-occupied either by thoughts of Selwyn, or the thousand self-imposed duties of what she called *her office*, she must often have read in his animated countenance what passed in his lordship's mind; but, accustomed to observe the habitual gallantry of his manner towards every good-looking young woman, she had noticed nothing particular in his behaviour to herself; and the idea of his being in love with her never once entered her imagination.

Such unaccountable blindness was not to be understood by a man of Lord Carlmaine's habits and experience; and he settled it by concluding, that the lovely girl had adopted this mode to lead him to the positive declaration she was

anxious to receive. Still, however, he was assailed by jealous fears respecting Selwyn; and he was therefore much pleased when the latter passed many successive days, as he frequently did, without presenting himself at Lord Montrevor's; where the Earl and his son were almost daily visitors, to the great amusement of Lord Montrevor, whose debility continued much longer than had been expected.

Lady Montrevor had joined with Caroline in anticipating some favorable circumstances from the unexpected arrival of Selwyn in town; but the very little emotion which she had been able to discover in him at his first meeting with Julia, had destroyed her hopes, and convinced her that his heart was not particularly interested about her. Though more vexed than disappointed, she was glad, on subsequently observing Julia more attentively, to find that, however her vanity might have suffered, her tranquillity was safe.

Her ladyship had lately begun to suspect Lord Carlmaine of entertaining sentiments of preference for her young friend ; but the idea rather alarmed than gave her pleasure, and she resolved to increase her vigilance ; and, if the suspicion was confirmed, not to lose a moment in preventing their meeting so frequently, while it was yet time to preserve her from the unhappiness which would probably attend an attachment to a man of his situation of life and habits. Julia had never, since her arrival in town, been one moment in Lord Carlmaine's company but in her presence ; neither was her ladyship aware that, since his return from abroad, she had spent a minute alone with him.

If therefore her fears had any foundation, it must be of a very recent date ; and she had every reason to believe, that Julia was herself wholly unconscious of the fact, if it existed.

## CHAPTER XIII.

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"She was his care, his hope, and his delight,  
Most in his thoughts, and ever in his sight.  
Next, nay beyond, his life he held most dear."

DRYDEN.

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ON learning the particulars of the late dreadful attempt made by Lord Montrevor on his life, both Edward and Frederick had been much shocked; but the former, receiving about the same time the news of Mr. Taverner's death, and the disposition of his property, soon lost all concern for his uncle's situation, in the new and agreeable subjects of reflection afforded him by the latter intelligence. Fifty thousand pounds bequeathed to his father, and which would doubtless come to him, was a very gratifying increase of wealth; and when to that he added, in imagination, Miss Montrevor's now large

fortune, he felt all his indecision at an end, and she appeared, in every respect, the most desirable and advantageous connexion he could possibly form.

When therefore these cousins met, Caroline had every reason to be satisfied with the apparent affection of one to whom she had been attached almost from her cradle. Edward willingly discarded the weak policy by which he had frequently been governed in his fluctuating partiality for his relation ; and determined to avail himself of every opportunity to improve her favourable dispositions towards him, and hasten the moment that would secure to him the possession of an amiable wife. While calculating these various advantages, with the cool precision of his character, he congratulated himself on never having been betrayed into any direct attentions towards Julia, (who, upon the whole, had perhaps more attraction for him,) which could seriously have excited

Caroline's displeasure ; and, seeing no impediment, he looked forward with confidence to an early accomplishment of his wishes.

He was glad at having quitted the University ; not that his residence there had been disagreeable to him, otherwise than as it linked him so closely with Frederick Lawrence ; towards whom his early conceived dislike and envy had much increased during the time they had spent together at Oxford ; where, though there was a considerable difference in their standing, Frederick was universally acknowledged as much his superior in academic proficiency, as the general suffrage declared him to be in all friendly dispositions. Nothing, however, had occurred personally between the young men essentially to interrupt the appearance of friendship. Indeed the respect and gratitude that Frederick felt for Mr. Byngham, blinded him, in great measure, to the defects in Edward's



character ; and, while conscious that he received only a moderate degree of regard, in return for the warm attachment he was desirous of cultivating, he attributed it to a naturally cold and phlegmatic temper in his friend, than any personal indifference. His own good will, therefore, and affectionate disposition, if not increased, remained undiminished towards Edward ; whose secret envy, having thus no excuse for explosion, he was compelled to confine to his own breast.

All the reflective turn and virtuous sympathies of Frederick's character were called into action by the unhappy news respecting Lord Montrevor ; and, shuddering at the fatal consequences of guilty indulgencies, he recalled to his memory the instructions of his kind friend Mr. Dermont, resolving carefully to guard his own heart against the very first approaches of vice. His hopes glanced towards the love of the youthful Emma

as his virtue's best security ; while, with constitutional diffidence of his own merits and good fortune, he trembled lest he might never possess a happiness, in the contemplation of which he had lately experienced an unspeakable charm.

Lord Montrevor gladly accepted the kind offices of Frederick ; who, by communicating the interesting publications and news of the day, or by accompanying him in the short rides he was soon able to take on horseback, proved, in these several departments, as necessary to his lordship's comfort, as Julia was in others. Immediately on his arrival, Lady Montrevor had made him acquainted with the report that had prevailed in Devonshire respecting Selwyn and his sister, with her own conclusions and sentiments on the subject ; a communication afterwards repeated to him by Julia.

The latter had been determined to confine herself to the very little that

could be said of Selwyn's attention to her, without touching upon the nature of the sentiments which he had excited in her bosom ; but her open affectionate nature could not repel the anxious investigation of her brother, or resist the desire of suffering him to read her heart as plainly as she did herself. That is to say, she discovered the ready disposition of that heart to fix its warmest affections on the man who had awakened its tenderness ; but as Julia had succeeded even in persuading herself, that she was fast recovering from the hasty infatuation, it was not surprising, that she impressed Frederick with the same belief. Much thought and investigation did he bestow on a subject which excited at once both his hope and fear.

Though Selwyn had not hazarded a word on the occasion to him, yet, from all he could collect, it seemed certain that his friend had been particularly marked in his attention to Julia, who was now

fully sensible of his merits ; and these abstract circumstances, as they fanned the dearest of his speculations, were highly flattering to his pride and fraternal affection ; and he still hoped that, as so favourable a disposition had been evinced, it was possible, nay very likely,—notwithstanding present unpromising appearances,—that the object he had often so ardently wished might in time be accomplished. Julia's acknowledged superiority seemed to justify these expectations ; and he noticed in Selwyn's manner towards her a reserve that was new and unnatural, and mixed, he thought, with an expression of lingering tenderness.

These were encouraging appearances ; but they also led to the idea, that the unhappy circumstances which had enveloped their birth, and the fate of their parents, in so much mystery, were perhaps the cause of the struggles he could not help fancying, on a close

observation, in the mind of his friend. Painful and distressing as was this impression, it did not wholly damp that hope so sanguine in the hour of youth; and he resolved, without delay, to put in practice his intention of repairing to Cumberland for the purpose of learning something more satisfactory relative to his mother; or gain some information respecting the articles lost so many years before, and which, he still thought, might lead to important discoveries.

On imparting to Mr. Byngham his anxious wish to undertake this journey, with the motives by which he was actuated, he was most agreeably surprised by that gentleman's offer to accompany him to Keswick. It was then settled, that, as soon as some business—which would for a short time detain Mr. Byngham in town,—was concluded, they should set off; that, if (as Mr. Byngham prognosticated, to check the buoyant hopes of Frederick,) nothing very par-

ticular occurred to prevent it, Frederick should proceed to spend the rest of the vacation at the house of Mrs. Dermont's mother; where the family had been detained long beyond their intention, by the ill health of the old lady, whose life appearing to draw near its close, her daughter had determined not to leave her. Mr. Dermont had also lately been unwell; and in yielding to the earnest solicitations of Mrs. Dermont, that he would join them at Scarborough, Frederick would thus perform an act of duty, dear to his grateful feelings, while he was delighted with the prospect of again inhabiting the same house with Emma.

Mrs. Dermont was, indeed, very partial to her husband's pupil; and when she found her care and attention almost solely claimed by her suffering parent, and her husband attacked by a severe rheumatic affection, she conceived that nothing would gratify him so much, or amuse his hours of confinement so

agreeably, as the society of Frederick Lawrence ; who would also enliven the unavoidable dulness of her daughter's life.

Mr. Dermont had never communicated to his wife the slight suspicion that had arisen in his mind, respecting Emma and Frederick, the morning on which the latter had left Devonshire for Oxford ; unwilling to give any cause of anxiety to her spirits, which were naturally as weak as her health was delicate. He still occasionally thought he could perceive in his little Emma traces of that separation, though scarcely more strong than what might, without any farther cause, be reasonably attributed to the loss of the companion of her infancy. A latent wish, which had its rise in feelings more worthy Mr. Dermont's mind than idle curiosity, had often prompted the desire of knowing, if the hasty conjecture he had formed of a rising preference on the part of young Lawrence for his daughter had any real

foundation. For though this excellent man was too wise to build any serious expectations on what could now, at most, be but a boyish partiality, yet still so alive was his soul to all the anxiety of parental affection, that, even thus early, he was at times almost involuntarily busy with the thought of Emma's future establishment.

He had often reflected upon the progress of human life, and had surveyed with practical skill its various stages: he now contemplated, with awful apprehension, its approaching vicissitudes, as they might affect the welfare of his child; and in those conflicts which extreme affection had then to sustain with his reason and piety, we must allow that the calm summer of his soul was sometimes clouded by short intervals of distrust and uneasiness. Mr. Dermont loved Frederick as his son, and most glad would he be to call him so, if the virtues of the man did but keep pace with the promises



held out by his youth. There were, however, drawbacks to this favourite project.

If Emma had a fault in the eyes of her doting father, it was a melting native sensibility, which even in childhood had increased, *perhaps*, her pleasures, but *certainly* had often augmented her little sorrows. While encircled by the sheltering arms of parental affection, this gentle sweetness served only to render her more dear and interesting to both father and mother; the latter, indeed, cherished as a virtue this natural refinement of feeling,—the expression of which was frequently called forth by her own nervous disposition and uneven temper. But Mr. Dermont had studied life and human nature too long, not to dread future evil consequences from this dangerous tendency of his daughter's mind; whose strong and latent energies he constantly sought to encourage and ex-

pand, in counterpoise to an excess of feeling.

To perfect his wish, and render safe and easy the journey through life of this chief object of all his worldly solicitude, Mr. Dermont rightly judged the companion to be desired for her, was one whose passions were as calm and well-regulated as his principles and virtues were defined and steady ; a man, in fine, like what he had ever believed Adolphus Selwyn. Frederick was, to be sure, much younger ; but, making every allowance for his age, he could not but believe that, though his understanding and the solidity of his judgment were matured beyond his years, and his heart filled with every manly, sterling virtue, yet that his character was tinctured with a degree of unmanageable sensibility and impetuosity of feeling, by no means favorable to the happiness of its possessor, or that of a timid female, who must look up to

him for resolution and dispassionate firmness.

Still, however, though Mr. Dermont was, by the imperfect and restless foresight of human nature, occasionally, in this one solitary instance, seduced into a desire of penetrating or regulating the future ; yet his long practised calm and humble submission in all events to the Divine Will, equally forbade the indulgence of too eager wishes or imprudent speculation ; and the usual tenor of his mind was still pious confidence and Christian resignation to the future dispensations of that Providence, who had already blessed him as the father of a virtuous child.

When Mrs. Dermont proposed Frederick's being invited to join them, her husband complied without any reluctance ; for, besides his own attachment to him, as he could not flatter himself (nor did he wish to do so,) that his residence here would be of much longer date,

he was desirous of strengthening at least the bonds of intimacy between his family and a young man, whose worth and honour were so well known to him, and whose friendship might hereafter be serviceable to them.

Julia heard, with unspeakable grief, that she should lose the society of her brother for what, in her estimation, was a very long time. The first object of his journey she perfectly approved ; for she, too, had felt unusually anxious and impatient at the humiliating mystery attendant on her own and Frederick's parentage. Knowing they would have so soon to sustain a new separation, these young relatives (on the union of whose orphan hearts Nature had fixed more than her usual seal of affectionate consanguinity,) endeavoured to enjoy to the utmost the time they had yet to spend together. Frederick, with his sister, was almost a constant attendant on Lord Montrevor, to the great annoyance of

Lord Carlmaine ; who, being obliged to exert an unusual portion of circumspection, was soon tired of the restraint ; and determined partially to absent himself, till his views could be prosecuted with a better prospect of success.

Selwyn still, occasionally, spent some hours with his friend, in the company of Julia ; but the latter had been so completely convinced, by his continued reserve and frequent absences, that, whatever sentiments he might for a short season have entertained for her, he now experienced nothing but indifference, or common friendly regard ; that she was more and more ashamed of her feelings towards him, and resolved—and re-resolved—to steel her heart against all unworthy weakness. Lord Carlmaine's guarded conduct removed or suspended Lady Montrevor's suspicions of his partiality to Julia ; and she was careful, therefore, not to impart them to Frede-

rick, well knowing his anxious tenderness for his sister.

Mr. Byngham having learnt that Captain (now Colonel) Howard was in London, and being desirous that his adopted son should have every opportunity of convincing himself, that all that was possible had been done above fourteen years before, to ascertain Mrs. Lawrence's connexions, &c. now introduced him to that gentleman, by whom he was received with marked kindness. But nothing satisfactory resulted from the visit. Colonel Howard could only repeat the former particulars he had related, and express his regret that he possessed no better information to communicate. An application to Mr. Ormond was attended with no better success, any more than several advertisements, which were again inserted in the public papers, offering a considerable reward to the captain of the vessel in which, in the

month of April, in such a year, a lady answering such a description, had embarked, unattended, at Cork for England; or to any passenger or others, who would give any information respecting her previous to her quitting Ireland, or after her arrival at B—.

Though Frederick's hopes sunk at these reiterated disappointments, yet he endeavoured to keep them alive by thinking there was a greater degree of probability, that the meditated inquiries would be more successful on a spot where his mother had resided nearly five years; and where the documents, which he persevered in believing of the most important consequence, had so unaccountably disappeared. Mr. Byngham was too much interested in these researches to seek to lessen the energy of them; and, if the recollections of his former ineffectual efforts checked his own expectations on the subject, he did not destroy those of Frederick.

The latter, however, in his cooler moments, dreaded some discovery that might annihilate his own and Julia's towering hopes, and forbid his entertaining the idea, that Selwyn, so richly endowed by Nature, fortune, and connexions, even if he loved Julia, would view as a wife one so deficient in every advantage his situation in life must have taught him to prize.

Mr. Byngham, who read the workings of Frederick's mind in his troubled countenance and broken accents, kindly bade him not despair, nor injure the generous nature of Selwyn; adding,—“I am much mistaken in him, if he would not rise superior to the considerations in question, was he really attached to your sister; and if he considered her calculated, in other respects, to constitute his happiness. But these are points,” he continued, “by no means determined. Adolphus is cautious both by nature and principle; and would, more than almost



any one, be sensible of the dangers attending an union of interests, where there was a great dissimilarity of character. Something of this seems, indeed, very apparent in his late behaviour. Julia, while at Mr. Huntley's, undoubtedly, by all accounts, attracted him ; but subsequent considerations appear to have induced him to suppress his rising inclination, and may succeed in wholly destroying it : but of *that* neither we, nor even himself, can yet judge."

The kind communication of Mr. Byngham's sentiments was soothing to the unsettled opinions of Frederick, who still looked forward with hope to his approaching journey. He could not refrain from imparting the particular object of this journey to Selwyn ; whom he had previously, with the approbation of his friends, made acquainted with the little he knew of his own and Julia's history ; and had found the kind partiality of Selwyn rather increased than

lessened by the communication. Now, therefore, when he imparted the alternate faint and sanguine hopes that agitated him, he met with the most friendly sympathy. And when, with mingled shame and pride, Frederick lamented the obscurity, perhaps dishonor, that had marked his entrance into life, the warm and generous Selwyn anxiously sought to cheer the drooping spirit of his young friend ; to whom, with feelings of delicate regard, he said, in the words of Thomson,—

“ I tell thee, whoe’er, amidst the sons  
Of reason, valour, liberty, and virtue,  
Displays distinguish’d merit, is a noble  
Of Nature’s own creating.”

Frederick felt sensibly the kindness of Selwyn’s disposition towards him ; and, while he still more highly prized his friendship, he cherished the hope, that a still dearer connexion was yet not quite impossible.

To the reader, who has been permitted

to see much passing behind the curtain, it may appear strange, that neither Julia herself, nor any of her watchful friends, should have been led to attribute the sudden and unaccountable alteration in Selwyn's manner to feelings of jealousy towards Lord Carlmaine. To remove this impression, we must recall the attention to the consummate art and caution with which the latter had conducted his proceedings, as well towards Julia as Selwyn; never having permitted himself any expression or attention sufficiently pointed to convey his direct meaning, or excite unusual notice. And we may add also, that Lord Carlmaine's softness of manner and elegance of address were known to be such habitual and successful passports in his intercourse with the female world, that Julia was considered as only sharing, with many others, in his general wish to please.

Persuaded, by the aid of Selwyn's great delicacy, both respecting Miss Lawrence and himself, that he had obtained a complete ascendancy over his mind, as far as Julia was concerned, Lord Carlmaine wished only to gain time to mature, what he was much disposed to believe, her increasing approbation of the passion, whose symptoms, however silent and guarded, he still thought she could not have misunderstood. In addition to our heroine's habitual good-humour, and the unreserved vivacity of her manner, to all who approached her with the appearance of friendship and good will, an unlucky fatality had repeatedly contributed to strengthen this his lordship's erroneous opinion.

Accidents had sometimes much befriended him; as on Mr. Byngham's lawn in Devonshire, and afterwards in London, when he deemed it policy to be present, whenever it was possible, at the

meetings of Selwyn and Julia : it had often happened that the latter, distressed by the observing looks of Selwyn, or anxious to suppress her own rising emotions, had sought refuge from embarrassment in heedless attention, or affected lively conversation, directed with no other intention towards Lord Carlmaine, who gladly received these fancied marks of distinction ; which were doubly acceptable, as, while they raised his hopes, must in the same degree depress those of his cousin ; if indeed, after such corroborating proofs, he could permit himself to retain any.

He was likewise in expectation, that the death of his father would ere long remove much of the restraint under which he laboured ; for, though the Earl was not apparently worse than on his arrival in town, and was still able to visit and receive his friends, yet the unanimous opinion of the faculty was, that, besides the apprehension of gout in his

stomach, there were other symptoms in his habit and constitution which precluded, not only the hope of his recovery, but of his long continuance in his present state.

Lord Carlmaine was not at all by temper unfeeling, nor deficient in natural affection ; and, could he have felt master of himself, and been able to indulge freely all his extravagant and vicious propensities, he would gladly have contributed to the prolongation of the days of an indulgent and once tenderly beloved parent. But numerous passions, so long and so indiscriminately favored, and blindly followed, now loudly called for still farther gratification ; till at length his guilty thoughts fixed on that period when he should acknowledge no censor or master but his own depraved wishes and inclinations. In short, sensuality was the centre to which all his views tended ; leaving natural affection and disinterested benevolence to occupy, as

they could, a wide circumference. Aware, in the mean time, of his critical situation, as well relative to his father as to Selwyn and Julia, Lord Carlmaine advanced, in his love and in his projects, with all the secrecy and caution to which his natural ability, and often exercised arts, rendered him fully equal ; and which, as has been seen, had hitherto secured him from detection, and almost from suspicion.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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“ But, ’midst the throng in merry masquerade  
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain?”

BYRON.

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WHEN Frederick arrived in town from Oxford, he had the pleasure to find, the first time he saw Lady Maria Carlmaine, that the condescending notice she had so obligingly taken of him in Devonshire, was not the mere caprice of the moment; since now, though often surrounded by the gay companions of her brother, or her father's friends, she still distinguished him with kind attention. Frederick was, for his age, wise and learned, but certainly not in the ways of the world, or those of women. While, then, his youthful pride and self-complacency were excited and flattered by the encouraging smiles which, when she really chose,



were ever ready to grace the manner and conversation of Lady Maria, he saw not,—or his untutored, inexperienced, mind understood not,—the gentle approaches, the soft blandishments of love, in a heart which till now had never felt its influence.

Yes, the haughty, unbending Maria, who, rich in classic lore, had looked down with cold contempt on the slaves or objects of a passion which so often bewilders the senses, overthrows the reason, debases the mind, and destroys the peace of man and woman-kind ;—Maria, who un pitying had heard the tale, or witnessed the bitter effects, of unrequited, hopeless, ill-fated, or despairing love, had at last learnt to know its sting and feel its power. The fine commanding form and manly beauty of Frederick's person, had at first attracted her notice : subsequent intercourse with him had discovered the enthusiasm and sensibility so gracefully blended in his character ; while the retiring modesty of his manner,

contrasting with the generous fire that sparkled in his full dark eyes, rendered him, in her opinion, a being of irresistible fascination.

Love did not, however, unopposed establish his dominion over the heart of Lady Maria Carlmaine. Pride, shame, and her natural love of independence, long disputed the possession ; and, though she occasionally indulged in all the pleasing reveries so peculiarly belonging to this smiling tyrant, yet still she maintained sufficient authority over her feelings to veil from every eye, even from Frederick's, the weakness of her heart. These were very arduous struggles ; for, how forcible is the power of Nature ! how seldom is her influence long suspended ! Gratified, however, with observing that, by degrees, the power of pleasing, which, though so rarely exerted, she knew so well how to wield, had conquered the timidity of Frederick, and destroyed or lessened the awe which she

had till now prided herself upon inspiring; she thought she could be satisfied to extend her influence no farther than to excite admiration and regard in a young man, so formed himself to inspire similar sentiments.

To converse with him, and receive those attentions claimed by her situation, and which his native politeness and favourable dispositions towards her made him ever ready to pay, constituted at first all her wishes; but soon the idea of Frederick's probable attachment to Emma Dermont awakened her to a more just sense of her own feelings; and she even condescended to resolve to contend with this puny rival for the heart of Frederick. Not that she was yet so completely enslaved by her growing preference as to purpose losing so entirely all respect for her noble ancestry and rank in life, as to wish to unite her fate with that of an unknown, perhaps base-born, youth. No! the same pride which, combined

with her rising love, prompted the desire of success in this her first endeavour to interest the heart of man, strongly revolted against the thought of such debasement.

The only gratification to which she allowed herself to look forward, and which so well accorded with the domineering character of her mind, was the pleasure of awakening in the breast of young Lawrence the first emotions of a lively passion, (for she would not dignify his childish tenderness for Emma with that appellation,) and enjoy the triumph without endangering her own liberty. While thus projecting an unfeeling conquest, she saw not the gulf she was opening beneath her own feet, and into which she was blindly precipitating her steps.

On Frederick, the effect produced by the exertion of her secret, delicate, and fascinating power, was indeed admiration of her ability and engaging manners,

and a grateful wish, in his turn, to prove himself not wholly unworthy of her condescending goodness ; but no feeling of a more tender nature towards Lady Maria approached the heart, where the sweet image of Emma occupied every avenue. Lady Maria, however, saw only the progress of her plans, and with gratified vanity anticipated the approaching subjugation of Frederick. She experienced much vexation on learning his intention of spending great part of his present vacation in Mr. Dermont's family ; an arrangement she justly conceived highly inimical to her own views. It was, however, what she had no possible means of avoiding ; and was therefore compelled to submit in patience and silence, and remit to a future opportunity the progress of her wishes, trusting that the impression she had already made on Frederick would not be easily removed or diminished.

The family of Lord Ashmore were re-

sident in town at the house of a lady of distinction, the widow of a general officer, to whom they were related. Under this respectable protection, Lady Maria, at the particular wish of her father, occasionally entered into select society; when she sometimes prevailed on Lady Montrevor to permit her daughter and Julia to be of the party, either at the Honorable Mrs. Baverstock's own house, or that of her friends, where she kindly offered to introduce them.

These scenes were highly agreeable to our heroine, who, however lovely and happy she appeared, and really was, while administering to the comforts and delights of a domestic circle, was naturally formed to shine in and enjoy the varied pleasures of a more extensive sphere. And, though she still carried to the "midnight revel and the festive show" a heart so deeply wounded that it was but half her own, yet native pride, (strong, but very different in its nature from what

inflamed the bosom of Lady Maria,) and her characteristic disposition to happiness and hilarity, enabled her often to enjoy amusements so suited to her age and temper. Julia indeed, in the best and most innocent sense of the expression, loved pleasure,—was formed for it,—and well knew how to inspire it.

Frederick was on every occasion almost her shadow ; and, ever pleased and confiding in his company, she not only heeded not the assiduities of Lord Carlmaine, offered on every favorable and safe opportunity, but even soon felt almost indifferent to the uncertainty she could not but notice in the manner of Selwyn.

This excellent, but unhappy, young man still struggled with undiminished love, restrained only by the conviction that Carlmaine was beloved, and his own a hopeless passion. Notwithstanding this belief, which, viewing every thing as he now did through the jaundiced me-

dium of jealousy and despair, gathered confirmation from every trifling and constantly-occurring incident, he yet had not fortitude to withdraw himself from a scene, where, though all that was passing was galling to his feelings, yet where he could, whenever he dare trust himself, contemplate the only woman who ever had been, or ever would be, dear to him.

Lord Montrevor's amendment was now so rapid, that they began to look forward to the pleasure of a speedy removal to Arlingham; whose air, it was conjectured, would complete the restoration of his health. One only amusement remained, of which, through the obliging politeness of Mrs. Baverstock, and the good-humor of Lady Maria, (who had of late greatly advanced in the favour of the family in Grosvenor-street,) Julia had not partaken, namely, a masquerade; and that she, consequently, wished at this time very much to see.

The opportunity of gratifying this de-



sire now offered. Lady Maria and her relation brought, one morning, tickets for all Lord Montrever's family to a masked ball given by the Spanish ambassador. Lady Montrevor at first wholly declined them, not choosing that her daughter and Julia should join in an amusement of that description, unattended by herself; but Lord Montrevor, understanding her scruples, and knowing how much Caroline and Julia had wished to see such an entertainment, insisted that the tickets should be accepted, saying that he was quite well enough to be left alone. Caroline was much pleased with the decision; Julia kissed his hand with thanks; and Lady Montrevor consented to what appeared the general wish.

The only drawback upon the promised pleasure to Miss Lawrence on this occasion, was that the eventful night would not arrive till after the departure of her brother and Mr. Byngam. She had

tried to detain them another week, but had not succeeded; so she could only console herself with the certainty of having dear Lady Montrevor with her for the first time in a London assembly; and, having assured Frederick he might rely on a detailed account of all that should occur on this grand occasion, with tearful eyes she saw him depart, and anxious wishes for success to the object of a journey in which their interest was the same. “But, happy or not in your views, my dearest brother,” said she, hanging affectionately on his neck; “write, and tell me all you do, and hear, and think; and remember that, if we are doomed never to discover any one to share our natural love, we must only cling the closer to each other: and, indeed, Frederick, were it not for the opinion of the world, I often think your kindness would be all-sufficient for my happiness.”

He answered these expressions of affection with corresponding warmth, and left her with more than his usual reluctance.

At the projected ball given by the noble foreigner, it was expected that all should appear not only masked, but in characters; and, after many animated discussions, it was settled that the three ladies, attended by Edward, should go as a group of ancient Spanish itinerant musicians. Ursula, who was commander in chief in the important business of preparation, discarding all her aches and complaints, exerted her ingenuity and memory to their utmost to furnish appropriate dresses, in which it was her delight to blend the Spanish and Moorish costumes.

Luckily, Miss Montrevor could play on the lute, Julia on the guitar, and Edward on the flute; while Lady Montrevor, whose voice had lost little of its tone or sweetness, could join in the vocal

part: thus, as Julia said, they would make a very charming group.

Lady Montrevor was dressed as a Spanish matron of the middle rank, and her two daughters in loose Turkish dresses, with braided hair and small caps ornamented with flowers; over which fell a black embroidered veil, which exposed or covered the face at pleasure, and was easily thrown back to permit the exercise of their talents. Edward wore a Spanish cloak, &c. with a Moorish turban.

Every thing succeeded beyond the high-raised expectations of Lady Montrevor's youthful party. The taste and sweetness with which some of the most beautiful airs and poetic romances, once so admired both by the Spaniard and Moor, were executed and accompanied, drew crowds round the pleased and lovely performers; whose secret was so well preserved that they had reason to believe they were not even known to

Lady Maria Carlmaine, till they chose to discover themselves. Her ladyship, whose heart was not interested in the scene, and wishing to escape all unnecessary trouble, had chosen the religious habit of an Italian novice ; having persuaded Mrs. Baverstock to accompany her in the hackneyed character of a lady abbess.

A fine figure, whose grace and dignity displayed to great advantage the splendid robes and ornaments of a turbaned monarch, was greatly attracted by the fair musicians ; as was a sibyl, who hovered round them, vainly offering for sale her mystic books. Julia, on whom they were particularly pressed, answered, “ Alas ! my friend, the time is gone by when your sacred leaves could have been serviceable to Rome ; and to us, unless you can get them set to music, they would be equally useless.”

The sibyl stretched forth her hands, and solemnly exclaimed—

“Rome’s scepter’d monarch, whom I sought to warn,  
Indignant heard; and sigh’d, alas! too late:  
Thy virgin fears my care would now alarm;  
Then trust a sibyl with an angel’s fate.”

“Away, old hag!” cried the sultan;  
“or, by the Prophet, thou and thy scrolls  
shall blaze for our amusement.”

“Well mayst thou wish to consume  
truths ungrateful to the ear of tyranny;”  
replied the sibyl: “but take heed lest  
they reach even the steps of thy unhal-  
lowed throne, and strike the hearts of  
those who now look up to thee with re-  
verence.”

On ending these words she withdrew,  
and was lost in the numerous assemblage,  
where the sultan’s eyes in vain pursued  
her, wounded by the words she had ut-  
tered. A Portuguese Jew now joined  
the Mahometan sovereign, just as a pert  
overgrown spoilt child snatched at a  
string round Julia’s neck, asking if it  
was the picture of her lover. The slender  
cord broke, and the precious relic, she

prized so highly, flew to a considerable distance on the ground. Our heroine's distress and agitation were so unfeigned that all who were near her immediately joined in the search. In a short time the Jew proved the lucky finder, and, after attentively examining it, he presented it to her, saying—"A broken heart, fair Donna, is but a bad property for you, and can be worth little to any one else; but, if you are inclined to part with it, I will give you the full value of it."

Julia, eagerly seizing her treasure, assured him that the riches of his whole synagogue could not purchase it. Lady Montrevor then withdrew with her party to a more retired apartment; where Julia, dreading the loss of her precious trinket, again passed the ribbon through it, and, uniting the broken ends, deposited it so carefully in her bosom, that it could not possibly attract the notice of any one.

Edward and Caroline had, at the

commencement of the evening, positively declared the sultan was Lord Carlmaine. Lady Montrevor observed that, he and his cousin being of nearly the same height and shape, she could not determine ; as, whichever it was, he had persevered most successfully in disguising his voice. Having, however, noticed his attention to Julia, she secretly hoped it was Selwyn. Julia also flattered herself with the same belief, and afterwards took an opportunity of asking Lady Maria what character her brother had chosen ; when she was mortified by the significant smile with which her ladyship assured her that she was not in his confidence.

A smart attorney's clerk now suddenly approached from behind, with a bag on his arm, his hands filled with parchments, and a pen stuck behind his ear ; declaring that he had so much business that he could find time neither to talk, eat, or sleep ; yet still importuning the



ladies to furnish him with another job. "Your settlement is nearly engrossed ;" he whispered to Caroline: then turning to Julia, he said, "Will you, too, not patronize the law, fair lady? Come, a few hints, and all shall be settled as quickly as you can wish. A handsome fee always sharpens the point of my pen as well as my wit ; and away they both scamper in the service of the ladies, and never stop till all is signed, sealed, and delivered."

"I am the match-maker," cried an old woman, with a basket of matches under her arm: "lawyers extinguish many flames, and light none but those of discord. Come to me, my pretty ladies and gentlemen ; I can kindle warmth and flame at pleasure: give me but the right materials, and I will make as many matches as you please."

The lawyer was still canvassing for business, when the company was summoned to supper: he then, in a voice

with which she was well acquainted, offered to conduct Lady Montrevor to the apartment where it was prepared. She accepted his services ; and Edward followed with Caroline and Julia. As they quitted the room, the latter asked young Byngham if he could tell her who that Jew was, whom she had remarked following, and apparently watching them. Edward said he had not the least knowledge of him ; and, telling her to keep close, endeavoured to make his way through the crowd, which was very great. At length, after some alarm and difficulty, Julia found herself safely seated, only separated from Lady Montrevor by the lawyer, who, to her surprise, on removing his mask, she discovered to be Lord Carlmaine.

Julia, now more than ever disposed to believe she had rightly guessed Selwyn's character, looked anxiously down each side of the table for the sultan ; but no sparkling gem-bestudded turban struck

her wandering eyes, which, returning to their own immediate neighbourhood, rested on the meagre visage, sallow cheek, scowling brow, and curled lip, of the Jew. He sat immediately opposite her, and, as she thought, frequently examined her with penetrating and almost malignant looks, stolen from beneath his deep and sable lashes.

Julia vainly endeavoured to avert her eyes from a face so unusually displeasing: they still constantly and involuntarily returned to fix on an object that filled her with uncomfortable feelings; and who, she almost fancied, seemed to comprehend and enjoy the uneasy sensations his observation excited.

Lord Carlmaine was more animated and agreeable than ever; but his lively sallies failed to amuse the only one for whom they were intended. Julia's heart at this time was closed more than, perhaps, it had ever been against pleasure. She repeated to herself, and to Lady

Montrevor also, on being questioned, that the cause of the depression her spirits had sustained, was, first, her agitation about the trinket she had so nearly lost, and afterwards by the disagreeable Jew ; when, in reality, the disappointment she experienced at not having again seen the sultan had a very considerable share in depriving her of her usual vivacity.

Heartily glad was our poor heroine when the conclusion of supper permitted her to leave a seat which she had found so peculiarly disagreeable. Before they rose from table, Lord Carlmaine had earnestly solicited the honor of her hand in the dance that was about to commence, and in which the masks were again to be resumed ; but she told him she did not think she should dance at all, and he withdrew, much mortified. Almost immediately on entering the ball-room, she was addressed by the sibyl, who, again offering her diminished

leaves, pronounced, in a tone of solemn incantation, these lines :

“ Virgin fair ! these leaves unfold :  
Virgin bright ! their truths explore,  
Drawn from wisdom’s sacred lore,  
Far surpassing purest gold.  
The God’s dread myst’ries dare to brave ;  
Buy them while they’ve power to save.

Julia was struck by the earnest manner which accompanied the words, and was preparing to answer ; when, in a distant part of the room, she beheld the so-much-wished-for turban, and immediately saying to Caroline, “ Let us move on,—I see the sultan ;” hastily quitted the importunate, disappointed sibyl. The Eastern monarch met the advancing party, when Julia instantly felt her spirits revive ; and, while she silently enjoyed the officious but delicate attention he paid her, fully convinced it could be no other than Selwyn, she suffered all her late suppressed tenderness to reinstate itself in her heart. Her own

pride and resentment, as well as the inconsistency of his late behaviour, were all forgotten ; and, yielding to the delightful idea which suddenly possessed her mind that she was still the object of his tenderness, she thought only of enjoying the smiling present.

To the first expression of his wish to dance with her she readily assented, and, as she felt his hand tremble while leading her to join the joyous set, her own partook of his emotion. In the pleased confusion of her thoughts and feelings, it never once occurred to her, till the conclusion of the dance, that she had been guilty of a gross incivility to Lord Carlmaine, by accepting a partner, after having so positively refused him. She now, however, hastened to impart her thoughtlessness and dilemma to Lady Montrevor ; who, though somewhat vexed at her want of recollection and discretion, was nevertheless well pleased

that Selwyn was the person for whom Lord Carlmaine had been slighted.

Flattering herself, therefore, with the possibility that the former might still be led to entertain serious views respecting her beloved Julia, she willingly undertook to make her excuses to Lord Carlmaine; with whom Julia readily consented to dance, at any time in the course of the evening, if he still condescended to wish it. Mrs. Baverstock, and the gentlemen of the party, now coming up, Edward was dispatched in search of the lawyer.

Though the sultan still persisted in his concealment, and in maintaining a feigned voice, with wonderful perseverance, all his particular friends and acquaintances doubted not that they had, by their own penetration, or the hints of the active limb of the law, discovered him, through his Oriental disguise, to be Selwyn; and thus no opposition was offered to his attaching himself, during

the remainder of the evening, to the Spanish group. Content with the conviction that it was Selwyn with whom she danced, conversed, and sauntered through the motley throng, Julia humoured in some degree his fancy, and generally addressed him according to his assumed character, excepting once, when, perceiving the sibyl at a little distance, thoughtfully leaning against a pillar that was encircled with wreaths of flowers, she suddenly exclaimed—"Pray, Mr. Selwyn, do tell me who that is who has so repeatedly pressed on me what was of old refused by Tarquin?"

"I have not been able to find her out;" replied the sultan. "But say, thou fairest of Spain's dark-eyed maids, you think you know me?"

"Yes;" returned Julia, with some hesitation and confusion: "I discovered you almost the first minute you spoke to us, though Miss Montrover and Edward thought you were Lord Carlmaine. Now,



however, the secret is no longer one for any of us. His lordship makes an excellent lawyer. But now," she continued, lowering her voice, and looking fearfully around her, "do observe that tall, stalking figure, in the habit of a Portuguese Jew. His mask, ugly as it is, is not half so horrible as the features nature has given him. Can you tell me who he is?"

"Yes, I know him well," returned the Turk; "he is a Spaniard of distinction, with whom my cousin and I were acquainted abroad. He is besides, I suspect, an admirer of yours."

"An admirer of mine!" cried Julia, shuddering, and involuntarily turning her steps to another part of the room.

"Yes," said the sultan; "he tells me he sat near you at supper; and has been asking a thousand questions about you, adding expressions of just admiration, which I must not venture to repeat."

Julia apologized for speaking so freely

of an acquaintance of his ; but he perfectly agreed with her in the justice of her remarks of his appearance, which he acknowledged was certainly very unprepossessing.

During this conversation, the Jew had still followed, and Julia had still advanced to avoid him, till she suddenly perceived she was wholly separated from her party. She earnestly expressed her concern at this circumstance, and, turning back, hurried successively through the long suite of rooms in search of Lady Montrevor, guarded by the Turkish cimeter of her royal attendant. The sibyl frequently crossed her path ; but, though she wished to see more of her, this was no time for sibylline verses, and she hastened forwards. At length, oppressed with heat, and agitated by the novelty of a situation which excited an undefined sense of impropriety, she grew faint, and, her legs beginning to tremble, she was obliged to accept the support of her com-

panion's arm ; who, perceiving she could scarcely walk, earnestly entreated she would allow him to conduct her to one of the several adjoining rooms, where she would find refreshments and a purer air. She resisted the proposal, till, by increasing anxiety and fatigue, being literally ready to sink, she was under the necessity of submitting.

Supported and almost drawn by the sultan, she entered a small room, where several ladies and gentlemen, disencumbered of their masks, were sitting, or walking about. Julia had scarcely reached a sofa, when she completely fainted away. She knew not how long she remained in a state of insensibility ; but the first object that struck her opening eyes was the back of the Jew, who was hastily retreating through an opposite door. The sultan stood near her ; and every possible restorative was administered by two ladies, who withdrew as soon as they perceived Julia was reco-

vering. Immediately rising with an intent to return to the ball-room, her strength again failed, and she was obliged to reseat herself.

Her companion occupied part of the sofa, and had taken one of her almost lifeless hands; and in that attitude was intently gazing upon her, as he presented a glass of water; while Julia, scarcely more than half-conscious of her existence, and with her eyes fixed upon the ground, awaited in silent agitation her slow-returning strength. At that instant the sibyl hastily entered, and, stopping on a sudden before the sofa, frantically tore the mystic leaves, and, strewing them about the ground, exclaimed—

“ Thus, scatter’d by rude Boreas’ blast,  
Weak man’s vain wishes lie ;  
The hour of doubt at length is past ;  
From thee—from joy, I fly.”

“ Selwyn, by heaven !” vociferated the enraged sultan, starting from the couch.

“Then, merciful Powers! who are you?” cried Julia, in a tone of horror and amazement.

“One who adores—has long most passionately adored you, Julia;” replied a voice at which she turned still paler than before; at the same time adding, as he dropped his mask, and Lord Carlmaine stood confessed, grasping her hand, which she struggled to withdraw,—“Nay, you must—you shall hear me. This night my soul has experienced all the torments of the furies; and now it seeks—it pants for some alleviation. Tell me my jealous fears are groundless: tell me Selwyn—that treacherous friend, with whom I trusted my secret,—has no power over a heart, for which I would barter fame, happiness, and life itself. Oh! Julia, say you will approve my love, and I am your slave for ever.”

Selwyn, whose agitated voice as the sibyl had betrayed him, had retired so precipitately that he heard nothing but

his cousin's exclamation ; and no one now remained in the room but Lord Carlmaine and Julia.

The latter, gaining a temporary courage from her alarming situation, exclaimed, in a haughty and peremptory voice,—“ Unhand me this moment, my lord, and let me join my friends. I perceive that accident, and an unfortunate mistake on my part, have exposed me to the humiliating address of a man, whom intoxication has deprived of reason.”

“ No ;” answered his lordship, still detaining her, and with bitter emphasis, “ it is the mistake which you allude to that has disturbed my reason. You have, I now suspect, played me most inhumanly false—you have deceived me. You must long have known my sentiments ; and this night, when I believed you favourable to my hopes, I am insulted, and made to owe even your hand in the dance, and the privilege of attending

you, solely to your belief that Selwyn was concealed beneath this disguise. But think not, proud girl ! that I will tamely see him supplant me, where I once thought myself successful. No ! my revenge and jealousy shall pursue him to the farthest corner of the globe, and force him to resign his views, and foreswear the vows he may have made you."

" You rave, Lord Carlmaine ;" said Julia. " Mr. Selwyn, on my honour, never made any professions to me ; nor does he feel the sentiments you so strangely impute to him."

" Add, also, that you regard not—you love him not," hastily rejoined his lordship ; " and I may yet pardon the injury he has done me."

But Julia's pride and delicacy, which had yielded for a moment to the timidity of her sex, and the dread of some desperate act on the part of Lord Carlmaine, now returned with native strength ; and, with resentful and contemptuous indig-

nation, she answered,—“ Surely your lordship’s senses have forsaken you, or you would not assume the right thus to question me. Truth, and the apprehension of the consequences of your mad passion, induced me to set you right in one particular ; but fancy not that I will condescend to answer farther questions. To-morrow, when your reason is restored, I have friends, thank Heaven ! who will meet your inquiries, and make you ashamed of the unworthy advantage you have taken of the accident which placed me defenceless in your power.”

As she ended these words, she suddenly released herself from the slackened hold of Carlmaine, and darted towards the door, at the entrance of which she was met by Lady Montrevor, Caroline, and Edward. She hastily grasped the arm of the former, and in hurried accents prayed instantly to return home. Her ladyship, alarmed by her manner, immediately led her to the hall, without



asking any questions ; and, the carriage being fortunately at the door, they soon reached home ; Julia having simply said she had been much alarmed at finding she had lost her friends in the crowd.

Lady Montrevor, during the short drive, was a prey to great anxiety ; and, on descending from the carriage, hastily retired with Julia to her chamber, earnestly inquiring what had happened to occasion the alarm and agitation so visible in her appearance. Julia could at first only answer by throwing herself into her ladyship's arms, and shedding a deluge of tears upon her maternal bosom.

## CHAPTER XV.

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“ It is jealousy’s peculiar nature  
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought  
To conjure much; and then to lose its reason  
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form’d.”—YOUNG.

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SELYWN had gone a few miles out of town some time before the Ambassador’s entertainment, not feeling any inclination to join in a scene for which the uneasiness of his mind so wholly unfitted him. In this excursion, one of those accidents occurred which occasionally seem directed by especial command; brought him acquainted with a dark proof of the artful profligacy of Lord Carlmaine, in the very recent seduction of a young creature, far removed above the usual objects of lawless pursuit.

In addition to the shock the correct and honourable principles of Selwyn sus-

tained at this display of moral turpitude, his faith began to stagger respecting the stability, if not the honour, of his cousin's intentions towards Julia ; and, trembling for the happiness of one so dear to him, he resolved to return near her, and with increased attention scrutinize both her conduct and Lord Carlmaine's ; when, if he found reason to suspect that her happiness was in danger, he would call upon his lordship for a farther explanation of his intentions ; and, should his declarations respecting Miss Lawrence not be perfectly satisfactory, he would awaken Lady Montrevor's and Mr. Byngham's attention to the subject. At the approaching masquerade, he thought circumstances and opportunities might arise to facilitate the investigation he meditated ; or, if not, he might, unknown, enjoy the pleasure of addressing and watching Julia. Thither, therefore, he secretly went ; having chosen the character of a sibyl, as one, perhaps, better

calculated than any other to disguise him.

Immediately on entering the room, he recognized Lord Carlmaine; and almost as soon the eye of love discovered the party in whom he was interested. Wishing to attract the attention of Julia in a manner to give him an opportunity of putting her rather upon her guard respecting Lord Carlmaine, he addressed to her the few lines he had hastily arranged for the purpose.

He was torn by jealousy on seeing the confiding manner in which Julia received the assiduities of the sultan, and burnt with indignation at the reply made to him by the latter. During supper was the only time in which he had lost sight of Julia; and he had not been aware of Lord Carlmaine's change of dress. When the company returned to the ball-room, finding her for the first time unaccompanied by the sultan, he again endeavoured to attract her notice. But at the

moment when he flattered himself that he had fixed her attention, he perceived her agitation in spite of her mask, and distinctly heard her urge Miss Montrevor to advance, *as she could discover the sultan!* This open avowal to Caroline of the interest excited by the Turk, whom Selwyn well knew Edward and Miss Montrevor had declared to be Lord Carlmaine at the commencement of the evening, convinced him that no doubt his lordship's pretensions to Miss Lawrence's favour were at length known and sanctioned by her friends ; a belief, in which he was afterwards confirmed by the pointed attention shown him by Lady Montrevor. And if he had before somewhat doubted the nature of Julia's sentiments towards Lord Carlmaine, he now read them distinctly in the happy expression of her countenance, whenever the heat of the room induced her to remove her mask, and in the light appearance of joy and ease with which she

danced with him, or wandered through the noisy scene, attended only by her sultan.

Unwilling to unmask, Selwyn had avoided sitting down to supper, and remained in the ball-room, a prey to the most mortifying sensations ; not doubting that during this time the favoured sultan was enjoying the countenance of Lady Montrevor and the society of Julia. All that afterwards occurred tended fully to confirm his belief that Lord Carlmaine had not deceived himself or him (Selwyn) respecting Julia's sentiments, of which there now appeared no doubt.

It was also evident, he thought, that Lady Montrevor and Mr. Byngham must be acquainted with them. Thus Selwyn felt assured that the interest and happiness of the lovely girl needed not his interference or solicitude ; and he resolved, if possible, after this night to think of her no more.

He saw Julia and Lord Carlmaine

enter the room for refreshments together, and for some time debated in his own mind if it were not impertinent, as well as useless, to follow them. It was now too late for any warning to be serviceable to Julia, as, from all he had remarked this night, he concluded the business must be completely settled. He had during the whole evening escaped discovery. Lord Carlmaine believed him out of town ; and Selwyn, yielding to the wish of again seeing the beloved woman he was now convinced he must resign for ever, and trusting to the disguise which had hitherto so well concealed him, he once more stood before her, and uttered the remaining meditated lines, more expressive of his own feelings than his assumed character.

Finding he was discovered, he instantly quitted the house ; and, on reaching his lodgings, wrote the following note to his cousin :—

“DEAR CARLMAINE,

“I know not what may be your suspicions; but I will not hesitate to say, that your conduct has of late been too mysterious, in spite of your alledged reasons, to make me quite easy about Miss Lawrence. If you feel indignant at this implication of a doubt of your honor or constancy, know that I have accidentally become acquainted with the parents of Nancy Wilmot; and, you must confess, I have some grounds for suspecting the rectitude of your principles. What I have seen to night, however, convinces me your views are known and sanctioned by all concerned; and I can only hope that the regularity of your future conduct may prove the sincerity of your affection, and teach you to respect the virtues and happiness of the amiable young woman who confides in your love.

“I set off immediately for Wales; and it will probably be long before we meet



again, as I purpose soon leaving England for some years. With every wish for your happiness, and those dear to you,

“I am, dear Carlmaine,

“Yours truly,

“ADOLPHUS SELWYN.”

Selwyn was in the act of delivering this note to a servant, when he received the following :

“DEAR ADOLPHUS,

“I wave every consideration to communicate intelligence which will, no doubt, shock you nearly as much as it has done me. On my return, an hour ago, from the Ambassador's, I found my father a corpse ; having expired, ten minutes before, in a fit of apoplexy. Every proper attention and skill were of course exerted. I am scarcely recovered from the effect of so sudden and dreadful an event ; but, while I thank heaven that I never did any thing seriously to

offend my father, and that he died in the pleasing delusion, that he should be able to prevail on me to marry according to his wishes, I cannot, even at this moment, be insensible to the emancipation before me ; which will of course remove every obstacle to the completion of wishes with which you are so well acquainted. Mr. Merrington was with the Earl at the time he fell, and has kindly undertaken to arrange all that is necessary on the melancholy occasion ; respecting which, it was my poor father's particular injunction, that every thing should be conducted with the greatest privacy. If you can come to me, I shall be happy to see you ; but, from the confirmation my suspicions received during the late entertainment, I am inclined to think it may be more agreeable to you to absent yourself for a short time ; in which case, be assured, I shall not accuse you of want of friendship.

Yours,

“CARLMAINE.”

Selwyn was indeed much shocked at the sudden death of a relation, whose uniform kindness had merited the just return of gratitude and affection ; and he paid to his memory the ready tear of sincere regret. The allusion his cousin already made to Julia was a still farther proof how unavailing were the feelings with which Selwyn still struggled ; and he felt a melancholy pleasure in finding there was no necessity for his remaining in town. To the note he had before written he now added another of kind condolence ; and, without acknowledging any particular reason, excused himself for not seeing him before he set out for Wales, which he should do in a few hours. He requested to be informed on what day the remains of his lamented uncle would be at Brookdale ; as he would certainly have the mournful satisfaction of meeting them there.

Having received an answer from Lord Carlmaine, naming the probable time of

the funeral, and replete with friendly professions, our unhappy lover left London with a mind torn by despairing affection and bitter self-reproach for that too cautious, indecisive conduct, to which he attributed his severe disappointment ; as he could not but think that at one time the heart of Julia was favourably disposed towards him, and might have been so still earlier, had he earlier determined to seek it. Could he but have discovered in the behaviour of Julia the least appearance of hesitation during the masquerade, he would still have hoped and risked every thing for an explanation with her : but so completely had Lord Carlmaine (now Earl of Ashmore), and combining circumstances, imposed upon his judgment, and the ingenuousness of his nature, that he saw every thing *en noir* for himself, and *couleur de rose* for his more fortunate relation.

An adverse power seemed to have been ever at hand to step between him

and the discovery of Julia's mistake, to which she owed all the enjoyment she had known on that eventful evening, and which produced that light appearance of pleasure so wounding to Selwyn; when, could he have penetrated her heart, his own would have been overwhelmed with transport. The same malignant fatality brought him ever on the spot, and at the moment when something occurred to confirm him in the error of Julia's attachment to his rival. Thus, under the mask of the sibyl, he had been near enough to hear young Byngham inform Lady Montrevor, that the sultan was Lord Carlmaine; but he heard not the latter and Julia afterwards declare their opinion that it was himself. Neither had he noticed the character of the lawyer,—which Lord Carlmaine had for a time assumed, to carry on a deception which greatly assisted him.

Such, and various similar trifling inci-

dents, even before the final scene in the refreshment room, had formed the grand climax ; and every hope, with every doubt, being removed from the mind of Selwyn, he resolved that no specious delusive suggestions of his own weak reason should prevent the execution of his determination to seek, in different scenes, that resignation and peace which, he felt, never could be his, while he was near enough to see or hear of the preparations for the union of Lord Ashmore with Julia. Selwyn's affliction now fed upon itself, and his discernment was obscured by the prevalence of strong and acute feelings.

At Brookdale he saw the last sad honours paid to the remains of his noble relative ; and having indulged his melancholy despair, by privately visiting every spot in the neighbourhood, which was endeared or rendered interesting to him by the recollection of Julia, he quitted

Devonshire, resolving not to return till time had wrought a powerful change in his feelings.

Several times he sat down to write to Frederick to describe all the weakness and wretchedness of his heart; but the natural reserve and prudence of his character, and the small portion of philosophic fortitude which remained to him, taught him to refrain from a confidence so humiliating, painful, and unavailing to himself; and awkward and distressing to his friend, who, however disposed to sympathize in his uneasiness, must naturally be delighted with the great elevation of a sister he idolized.

Unwilling to enter partially, with one he highly valued, on a subject that interested them both so much, he recollected that, as he had heard nothing further on that head from his cousin, he was not fully at liberty to mention it; and gladly seized this excuse for the total silence on which he determined. He therefore sim-

ply informed Frederick, that he was going abroad, to lose the remembrance of a disappointment he had experienced ; the particulars of which he would, perhaps, communicate to him, when time had, by softening their severity, rendered unnecessary all claims on his friendly sympathy.

The rest of the letter contained warm expressions of friendship and liveliest interest ; concluding by informing him, that five thousand pounds was placed in the name of Frederick Lawrence in the hands of such a banker, the loan of which he earnestly requested he would accept, to facilitate the advancement in his profession ; being the only proof he asked of the sincerity of a friendship which would be always most dear to him.

Selwyn certainly felt a friendship for Frederick ; but, in his present kind offices to his friend, there was a mixed motive which influenced him. If Frederick was



benefited, if his happiness received any accession, Julia's heart would welcome the intelligence, and share his grateful feelings. Thus Selwyn reasoned; and, on this occasion, secretly enjoyed the luxury of making his friendship in no small degree subservient to the gratification of his love.

He added that, as he was quite undetermined in what direction he should bend his course, it was not in his power to give him any direction; but that, when he could do so, he would write. This Selwyn did to avoid, for a time, receiving intelligence, which, in his present state of mind, he knew would be most painful.

While he had been thus agitated by disappointed affection, the object of his jealousy and envy was torn by much more ungovernable and malignant passions. There had been something in the manner of Julia which had made Lord Carlmaine suspect, early in the evening of the masquerade, that she believed he

was Selwyn ; and, burning with jealous rage, he resolved to discover if his suspicions were just. With this view, he changed his dress before supper, during which he should have to unmask ; when the expression of artless pleasure with which Julia looked at him as his mask fell, and the significant complacent smile with which Lady Montrevor said,—“ You were perfectly right, Julia ;” were distinctly understood by his lordship, who resolved to gratify, in some measure, both his love and revenge, before the end of the evening.

For the present, however, he repressed his feelings ; and, his spirits rising with the scheme he was meditating, he sought, by his usual animated conversation, to enliven Julia ; secretly cursing the disappointment, restlessness, and anxiety, so visible in her countenance, which he wholly attributed to the absence of the sultan. On leaving the supper room, Lord Carlmaine hastened to resume his

Turkish dress; and, joining the party, felt what he would never have believed possible,—that there could be torment in dancing with Julia, in watching the unconscious elevation of her spirits, and in remarking the occasional, involuntary softness, almost tenderness of her accents and manner.

His lordship had studied too long, and too attentively, the female heart, not easily to penetrate on this occasion many of our unguarded heroine's feelings; and, could he have believed he was indeed the object whose attention awakened such ill-concealed pleasure, there was perhaps no sacrifice to which his increasing love and admiration might not have induced him to submit. But if for a moment he felt a thrilling pleasure steal through his veins, while pressing close to his heart the hand which the crowded room, or Julia's fatigue and terror at having missed Lady Montrevor, served as excuses for detaining, that de-

light was quickly poisoned by the consciousness, that one word would instantly deprive him of even his present scanty happiness.

Imperfect, however, and embittered as it was, he resolved to enjoy it as long as was in his power ; and with this view, availing himself of her childish fear of the Jew, he purposely drew her from her party ; and thus, for a considerable time, seemed to monopolize the whole of Julia's company and attention, to the great annoyance of the observing Selwyn.

At length the closing scene of the masquerade, as far as it respected *our* friends and acquaintance, took place ; and Lord Carlmaine returned home, a prey to the most fierce and turbulent passions. To love and jealousy was now added the thirst of revenge towards Selwyn, who, he was more than ever convinced, had, in violation of the confidence reposed in him, obtained the affection of Julia ; and that he (Lord Carlmaine) should, in

consequence, lose all the fruit of his cautious stratagems and self-denial. In this state of mind he received the intelligence of the Earl's sudden death, with which he was certainly much shocked ; for, as we before observed, Lord Carlmaine loved his father as sincerely as was in the power of a man of his selfish habits.

Soon, however, all the advantages of perfect independence forcibly impressed his mind, and checked his sorrow ; while the paramount feeling of his soul was inordinate love for Julia ; and not doubting that, in spite of any preference she might have for Selwyn, one regular application to Mr. Byngham would not only meet his full concurrence, but also of Julia herself ; and, unable to endure the idea of Selwyn bearing off such a prize, he resolved, as soon as decency permitted, to apply in form for leave to address Miss Lawrence.

This might be called affection for Julia ; but it was a passion in which a mind of virtue and sensibility could take little interest. Lord Ashmore's love was, indeed, scarcely a faint copy of the pure disinterested original, which deserves the name. In him it was a very mixed sensation ; of regard for a lovely object, of pride, of the desire of possessing what others greatly admired, and ardently sought ; and of uneasiness arising from any sort of opposition, which he never meditated, and which he was wholly unprepared to endure.

He was well aware of the magnitude of the sacrifice he contemplated ; but so unbounded was the power she had gradually and unconsciously acquired over him, that, in the ardour of his passion, he believed no price would be too great for its gratifications. The disclosure which the violence of his emotion had lately forced from him, must have pre-

pared both Julia and her friends for what they would naturally expect should follow ; and thus he had irretrievably committed himself : but to that he was soon rendered indifferent by his jealous apprehension of Selwyn, and his own love for Julia, which had suffered no diminution from the discovery that she was attached to his cousin ; and all he wished was to secure to himself the possession of a woman who had taught him what it really was to love, before Selwyn should be undeceived, and have had time to make up his slow and cautious mind to the same step.

His lordship's subsequent correspondence with his cousin made, however, some alterations in his plans ; and, finding that nothing was to be feared from Selwyn,—whose disappointment appeared to have taken precisely the turn the new Earl could have wished,—his reluctance to the matrimonial fetters revived the wish of obtaining Miss Lawrence on

easier terms. He therefore changed his designs, and resolved not to precipitate measures ; but to wait the result of the complaint to her friends, with which Julia had so haughtily threatened him. Once assured Selwyn had wholly relinquished her, and gone abroad, he should be relieved of more than half his fears ; and though he occasionally experienced a conscious sense of remorse and self-degradation, at the baseness of the imposition he was so successfully practising on the generous candor of his relative, he much oftener persuaded himself that Selwyn had fully deserved such treatment, either by concealing his affection for Julia when he (Lord Ashmore) confided to him the secret of his own love ; or, if his heart was then free, of meanly taking advantage, afterwards, of his absence, to supplant him in the opinion of the woman he loved.

He not unfrequently also joined with Lucas, who was now again his constant



companion, in ridiculing the pitiable figure made by these juvenile philosophers, and *exemplary young men*, when they are at last overtaken, and led to meddle with love: though those profligate friends could not refuse to Selwyn the meed of manly, penetrating sense, on most occasions; they enjoyed, or feigned to enjoy, many a hearty laugh at the easy simplicity and good faith with which he had submitted to the noose, and had consented to be led in the very contrary direction to that towards which the newly awakened feelings of his heart pointed.

To flatter every inclination, and facilitate the gratification of all Lord Ashmore's passions, however irregular, had always been the habit of Lucas. It was indeed a trade he practised, as well upon this nobleman, as all others, whose vices wanted a ready agent, and who could afford to pay for his adulation and services. Lucas's life and conduct exhi-

bited all the meanness of vice. First profligate, then extravagant, and, by consequence, dependant upon the caprice of others ; he lived by basely flattering and promoting the vicious follies of his wealthy associates ; had no wish to emerge from a state of servitude, to which his own depravity had reduced him ; and had no apprehensions of future evils, except what might personally arise to himself from the returning virtue and good sense of his deluded pupils.

Aided by the advice of this worthless counsellor, the young Earl, therefore, settled to remain inactive for the present, and suffer his address to Julia at the masquerade to be considered, as she then seemed inclined to believe it, the effect of intoxication, rather than hastily fetter himself ; a last resource, which would always remain to him when all other plans proved ineffectual. Nothing however but the certain intelligence, which Lord Ashmore received imme-

diately after his father's funeral, of Selwyn having positively quitted the shores of England, could have prevailed on the Earl to consent to this inaction ; as, in spite of his friend's raillery, and the recollection of former violent love fits, he felt his passion for the beauteous Julia was daily becoming more serious and ardent.

Leaving Selwyn to struggle with an attachment which artful perfidy, and the narrowness of human penetration, rendered unfortunate, and to seek in foreign scenes to forget those passing at home ; leaving also the young Earl of Ashmore to the unequal contest between many evil passions, inflamed by vicious counsels, and very few good feelings, we will inquire if any discoveries were made by our hero in Cumberland ; or rather let us first undraw the curtains of the bed on which our poor Julia has spent many hours wakeful, restless, and unhappy.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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"The rose was yet upon her cheek,  
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak :  
Where was the play of her soft lips fled ?  
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red."

LORD BYRON.

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YES ; Julia was wakeful, restless, and unhappy. She had eagerly sought for comfort and relief on the bosom of her almost more than mother ; and had, for the first time in her life, failed of finding it. Lady Montrevor listened with surprise and tender interest to the history of the mistakes of the night ; but when she heard that Lord Carlmaine had made an unequivocal, though intemperate, declaration of his love for her, that surprise increased, and her ideas gradually took a new direction.

She did not believe, as Julia had done,

that his lordship had from inebriety been unconscious of what he had said ; and she could not repress a sensation of triumphant pleasure, at the prospect of so splendid, so unexpected, a conquest for the lovely girl, from whom she exacted several times a repetition of all the strange circumstances which had marked the last few hours. Selwyn's behaviour was to her quite incomprehensible ; for, though she now thought it was evidently influenced by jealousy of Lord Carlmaine, yet it had been equally strange in Devonshire, before his lordship's return from Ireland, or so immediately after, that Julia could scarcely have seen him.

In short, though, could she have chosen, she would not have hesitated for a moment to give the preference to Selwyn, as a man far more estimable in himself ; yet as she could not flatter herself with succeeding in that wish, she yielded to the new prospect that seemed open. This amiable woman was perhaps less

inclined than any of her sex to be dazzled by the false glitter of adventitious advantages; and sterling worth, probity, and honor, far outweighed, in her estimation, the tinselled gildings of rank and fortune: but, perhaps inseparable from her situation, perhaps ever latent in the female breast, there was in that of Lady Montrevor, probably unknown to herself, a prejudice in favour of high birth and exalted station; which, though it had never been able to veil the errors of Lord Carlmaine's character, now combined with her fond partiality for Julia to dispose her to view them in a more favorable light, and with greater hopes of amendment than she had ever before done.

In the consolations, therefore, which Lady Montrevor now offered to the weeping girl, she glanced but slightly at the tenderness she had almost avowed for Selwyn, whose behaviour, she said, whatever were his motives, proved, she

thought, unquestionably, that he had no serious views of addressing her ; and then entered at considerable length upon the surprising advantages of an union with Lord Carlmaine, if the Earl's approbation could be obtained.

“Surely, madam,” cried Julia, for a moment suspending her tears, while her before pallid cheek glowed with love, shame, and surprise ; “you cannot even compare Lord Carlmaine with his cousin ?”

“No, my love,” returned her ladyship, “indeed I cannot : but in this case, it seems, we have not the power of selecting. One appears wholly to avoid or neglect you ; while, you tell me, the other professes to be much in love with you.”

“Oh ! my dear madam,” exclaimed Julia impatiently, “I cannot believe it. He seemed mad with some more violent passion than love ; and, I am sure, was not himself when he said so, or he would not have frightened me so terribly. I

never once thought of such a thing; and I sincerely hope, and believe, he will not revert to it again. I never did like him, and now he will be my aversion;" she added, sobbing at the recollection that it was perhaps to him that the change in Selwyn's manner towards her might be attributed. At any other time Lady Montrevor would have reminded Julia, that she had never observed any sign of particular dislike in her behaviour to Lord Carlmaine, with whom she had, indeed, often appeared on terms of good-humoured and friendly partiality; but the young creature before her was much too seriously distressed by all that had lately happened to permit the affectionate heart of her ladyship to add one more word, but what was most likely to sooth her agitated spirits; for well was she aware that—

“—— when so full the cup of sorrow grows,  
Add but a drop, it instantly o'erflows.”

Without, therefore, even hinting at the



agreeable prospects now in question, she kissed her; and, having kindly said every thing she could imagine calculated to assist the restoration of her tranquillity, dismissed her to her chamber.

It was long before the lovely syren, so late the admiration of all who had approached her, but now cruelly depressed, could resolve to seek the rest nature loudly called for; and still much longer, ere her aching head found the oblivion her pillow had hitherto afforded. In the maze of perplexing conjectures, and painful recollections, which rose in tumultuous disorder to her mind, one giant cause of affliction, regret, and almost self-reproach, towered high above the rest.

All the apparent inconsistency of Selwyn's conduct was unravelled; and, strange and unaccountable as she considered it, he had, in his behaviour this night, exhibited strong marks of jealousy towards Lord Carlmaine. She recol-

lected the persevering importunity of the sibyl, as well as every word of her mysterious verses ; in which she now thought she could trace a smothered tenderness, as well as an affectionate warning voice. Too well, also, did she call to mind a thousand nameless trifles in her own conduct, while constantly attended by the hateful sultan, that could not fail to stamp the strongest conviction on Selwyn, that the attention of Lord Carlmaine was agreeable to her.

How this blind and fatal mistake, this change of character, this total overlooking of Selwyn, had happened, she could not understand ; but the certainty, that she had herself been the most effectual instrument in destroying her own happiness, admitted no doubt ; and she felt but the more wretched at what appeared, not the persecution of any individual, but of an adverse fate, from which no flight could save her.

They say that, in all hearts of great

sensibility, and capable of strong affection, there generally enters some small portion of superstition ; and a discovery now made by our Julia excited feelings corroborative of the assertion.

While tossing on a bed, which nothing could render easy, she suddenly missed the broken trinket from her neck. In a moment every other idea was suspended; and, starting up, she hastily tore all the covering from the bed, then examined every article of dress she had lately taken off; and again returned to search more carefully the bed and furniture. Carpets were lifted up, chairs and tables removed, and drawers emptied on the floor ; but all without producing the lost treasure.

At last, wearied with her fruitless toil, she sat down under a sensation of despair, conceiving that a fatality at this time prevailed over her, and that she could only submit to her destiny. By degrees her excellent education dispelled

these first feelings of despondency her youthful bosom had ever known ; and, becoming gradually more calm, she was soon enabled to taste those comforts, descending from religious considerations on a guileless heart. Conscious that no act, thought, or word of hers, was voluntarily stained with an intention to transgress the commands of her Maker, or injure any of his creatures, she derived her accustomed consolation from self-examination ; and, after humbly imploring from Heaven strength of mind, and the composure of her agitated passions, she determined to leave the prosecution of her search for the trinket, till she had ascertained that Lady Montrevor and Caroline had not found it. She then again threw herself on the bed ; where tired nature, in spite of anxiety, soon weighed down her swollen eye-lids.

She was still sleeping, when, at a late hour in the afternoon, these two kind friends entered the room, and were struck

with the greatest surprise at the disorder of her bed, and the confusion which reigned in every part of the room. Julia awoke the next minute ; and, her loss instantly recurring to her mind, she inquired of Lady Montrevor and Caroline if they had seen it. They answered in the negative, and then assisted in the search which she immediately recommenced ; but all to no purpose. The fatigue which old Ursula had gone through in preparing for the late entertainment, had prevented her sitting up for the return of the party ; and Julia, not choosing any one else should witness her uneasiness, had undressed herself ; therefore no one had been till now in the room, consequently all inquiries in the house must be unavailing.

While dancing and walking about the room, Julia had frequently thought of her concealed locket, and anxiously ascertained its safety ; but she did not recollect once thinking of it after she fainted.

This suggested the probability, that it might then have been lost; and Lady Montrevor, who could not attach any great importance to a trinket that seemed destined never to lead to the grand discoveries with which she knew her young friend had occasionally fed her imagination, promised immediately to take every means likely to recover it; adding, that she had no doubt, that it would soon be brought to them, as it was of little or no value to any one else.

By these and similar kind representations, Julia experienced considerable alleviation of her uneasiness on this head; and, as all her surrounding friends, tutored by Lady Montrevor, exerted themselves during the day to lessen the impression made on her mind by the events of the preceding evening, her spirits by degrees became much more composed.

Julia's pride, as well as delicacy, had led her to request, that Caroline and Edward

should not be informed of what she persisted in considering the humiliating declaration made to her by Lord Carlmaine. Thus young Byngnam was aware of no reason to prevent his lounging, as he usually did, every day to call on Lord Carlmaine, in Hanover Square, from whence he returned with the melancholy news of Lord Ashmore's sudden death. The whole family in Grosvenor Street were much afflicted at the loss of an old and valued friend, whose kind disposition, practical knowledge, and cheerful habits, enriched very much that social intercourse which had long subsisted between them.

When Lady Montrevor's regret had a little subsided, the first idea that occurred to her was, that this event, awful as it was in itself, might be at this period of great service to the lovely orphan, if, as she could not but sometimes believe possible, Lord Carlmaine seriously entertained thoughts of making her his wife; a fact of which Lord Montrevor enter-

tained great doubt, from a thorough knowledge of the man and his habits. At any rate, no further step could be expected for the present; and it was judged prudent to suspend all opinion and conversation with Julia on the subject.

Nothing occurred till after the funeral of the late Lord Ashmore, when Captain Lucas called on Lord Montrevor to offer the apologies of his friend, the present Earl, for having, he was apprehensive, most unintentionally offended Miss Lawrence, while under the influence of wine, which he had unguardedly been induced to take by the heat of the rooms at the Ambassador's. This unworthy emissary added, that, though his noble friend was quite unconscious of what he had said to the lady, he was yet but too well aware, from her words and manner, which he well remembered, that he had been guilty of some disrespect or indiscretion.



Lord Montrevor was not surprised at this termination of what he styled his wife's romantic hopes ; and, having undertaken to deliver the Earl's apology to Miss Lawrence, he first sought the apartment of Lady Montrevor. She expressed as much indignation and resentment as was compatible with the gentleness of her nature ; and, after a short deliberation, they both agreed, that to resent Lord Ashmore's behaviour would be impolitic on every account, but particularly on that of their young friend, who might thus become an object of curiosity, if not censure.

Julia for a moment felt all the native dignity and *hauteur* of her character roused at hearing this message ; but the more lively emotion of her mind prevented the long indulgence of those feelings, and she begged Lady Montrevor would have the goodness to return what answer she judged proper, only requesting that she might be permitted to avoid

seeing his lordship, if he called. On his return to Capt. Lucas, Lord Montrevor informed him, that Miss Lawrence was as desirous as the Earl of Ashmore could possibly be to forget all that had passed on the occasion alluded to.

The Earl soon after paid his visit ; but was compelled to take his leave without seeing any one excepting Lord Montrevor, who however received him with his usual cordiality. Lord Ashmore expressed great regret that he was obliged to return almost immediately to his regiment, which was still stationary in Ireland, and readily accepted an invitation to dine, with Mrs. Baverstock and Lady Maria, in Grosvenor Street, before his departure.

Lady Montrevor was not displeased at this engagement, as she could not wholly relinquish the views she had somewhat hastily formed for her young favourite, whom she was rather anxious to see in his lordship's company. Julia was greatly distressed when her ladyship

told her she could not possibly absent herself from table, without exciting suspicions and conjectures injurious to the delicacy of her character. She was therefore obliged to submit; though never was our poor heroine less qualified to appear in company. The wounds lately inflicted on her pride, as well as her peace and tenderness, were yet but very slightly closed, and she was still a prey to vexation and anxiety respecting the lost trinket, which, notwithstanding the repeated rewards offered, and the inquiries made, could not be found.

Lady Montrevor had kindly undertaken, at Julia's request, to give her brother a brief account of what had occurred at the masquerade, well knowing he would be anxious to hear from her, before she could be sufficiently calm to write herself. In this relation her ladyship, with affectionate consideration, passed lightly over every circumstance likely to excite too lively a concern in the mind of this

affectionate youth respecting his sister ; and treated the loss of the mutilated trinket as an accident, which, though in some degree vexatious, was yet in itself wholly unimportant ; acknowledging, however, that she had been unable to console Julia, who, though much grieved herself on the occasion, felt still more sensibly the regret she conceived he would experience at the loss.

Frederick hastened immediately to assure his sister, in the most affectionate manner, that he felt little or no concern for the loss she so much lamented ; particularly as the fruitlessness of his inquiries in Cumberland convinced him that the very slight vestiges they still possessed of their unfortunate mother would ever remain equally unavailing. He then delicately alluded to the masquerade ; telling her, that, if communicating the feelings of her spotless heart to a brother who would gladly give his life to promote her happiness, would

afford any relief to the uneasiness he feared she experienced, he should be most happy to receive her confidence; but that, if it was more agreeable to her, he would not wish to penetrate further than he already knew.

In fine, he left nothing unsaid that the most tender affection could suggest, to lessen her vexation, cheer her drooping spirits, or inspire her with confidence in his love and protection. He added, that he would instantly have hastened to comfort her by his presence, if a grateful duty towards his friend and benefactor, Mr. Dermont, who was far from well, did not for the present detain him from her; unless he could be of positive service to her, in which case he would set off immediately for London. He said but little either of Lord Ashmore or Selwyn; observing that he was very incompetent, while at a distance, to enter upon the subject, which he would therefore postpone till he had the happiness of

embracing her ; unless (which he much wished) she would by letter put him in possession of her sentiments, as also of what had occurred at the Ambassador's, of which Lady Montrevor had, he confessed, given him but an imperfect idea.

This letter was an efficacious cordial to the heart of Julia ; and she lost no time in complying with the affectionate wish of her brother, by giving him a circumstantial account of all that had passed since they parted. But, when she would have entered on the secret sufferings of her heart respecting Selwyn, maiden pride and modesty involuntarily withheld her pen ; and, without meaning concealment or disguise, her words described neither the tenderness of her love, or the bitterness of her disappointment ; and thus conveyed not to her anxious brother half the pain he would have felt, could he have seen all the sad wreck of hope and spirits, which desolated the heart of Julia.

The latter had heard of Selwyn's having quitted England; and she was now endeavouring, with the kind persuasions and prudent suggestions of Lady Montrevor, to conquer her feelings, and assume as much of her usual manner as possible, at least before Lord Ashmore; that she might prevent the humiliating conclusions he would perhaps think circumstances authorized him in making. This argument affected Julia very sensibly; and, aware that his lordship knew she had mistaken him at the masquerade for Selwyn, and conscious that many, though trifling, things had then passed, which might be supposed by the Earl to betray the pleasure she derived from this error, she shrunk with delicacy from the thought of appearing before him as suffering under the feeling of disappointed affection for a man who had proved himself so regardless of her.

Proudly therefore she resolved, at least

for this one day, to dress her countenance and manner in tranquillity, and conscious rectitude. All these expedients, however, tended to nothing better than, for a short time, to disguise her feelings, and render the arts of concealment more successful: her heart did not less sensibly feel its own bitterness; and hoarded, with a miser's care, the recollections of her sufferings and her love. She could not yet clearly understand what had been his lordship's motive in persevering to impose on her and her friends at the masquerade, unless it had originated in a frolic, or ungenerous curiosity respecting Selwyn. In regard to his behaviour at the moment when he discovered himself, so great had then been her own surprise, confusion, and agitation, that, though she remembered chief of the words then passionately addressed to her, she almost failed to understand their meaning; and the first impression his



furious deportment made on her, of his being under the influence of intoxication, retained possession of her mind.

While dressing for dinner, on the day Lord Ashmore was expected, Julia bestowed more than her usual care in adorning her person ; not with a view of making it more attractive, but hoping thereby to conceal the effects which she could not but be sensible her late anxiety had produced on her appearance, and which she dreaded, more than any thing, the Earl's attributing to the real cause. On her entrance his lordship approached her with mingled respectful diffidence, and the graceful easy manners so natural and becoming to him. He had been most anxious again to behold the bewitching girl, who was at once the idol and torment of his life ; and he had come resolved to try the ground, and penetrate, to the best of his ability, if there was even the faintest prospect of his ultimately being able to seduce, or gain pos-

session of her, by any other means than hateful matrimony.

By his frequent intercourse with Edward Byngham, he was assured that no intelligence had reached Lord Montrevor's family of, or from, Selwyn, consequently his fears respecting him were suspended for the present ; while, by the indefatigable exertions of Capt. Lucas, and other secret means, the Earl obtained such clear details of all that was known of the private history of Mrs. Lawrence, as rendered all thought of an union with her daughter more than ever disagreeable to him ; and, at the same time, encouraged him to persist in his guilty views. But, after an hour spent in the society of his meditated victim, all his projects were overthrown by her powerful attractions, and the force of his impetuous desires.

Julia in her happiest moments, and in the gayest circles, had never possessed half the fascinating charms as those with

which she was now surrounded. When she entered the drawing-room, where the family and the guests were assembled, her confusion was so great, that Caroline, who affectionately supported her, wishing to facilitate her regaining her self-possession, led her hastily up to a portrait of Lady Montrevor, which had lately been sent home. While examining this resemblance of her friend, she succeeded in assuming the appearance of composure and indifference she had studied to attain before she left her apartment; but soon Nature, ever powerful, and pleased in showing herself in Julia, prevailed.

The sparkling lustre of her eye was chastened by affliction, and the most pure and refined touches of sensibility spoke forcibly to the heart, in the ever-varying colour of her cheek; from the lily's pallid hue through all the glowing shades that tint the rose. The ready smile that used to wanton round her mouth, and linger, with arch playfulness, in a dimple, which

added beauty and sweetness to her full parting lips, was fled, or past so rapidly away, that the melancholy expression of her features was not disturbed by the artificial attempt. This expression was also visible in almost every movement of her still graceful, though languid, spiritless form.

It has been often remarked, and Sterne has added currency to the sentiment, that affliction gives a softness, interest, and peculiar kind of beauty to the human countenance. This was exemplified in Julia's present appearance, which offered to Lord Ashmore's contemplation a new style of beauty in the same lovely being ; and his eyes became rivetted on her as by enchantment, while hers fell depressed beneath his gaze ; thus enabling him longer, unreprieved, to dwell upon the charms of her beauteous face, and admire the irresistible grace and attractions shed in such natural profusion over the whole of her fine person.

The sweet modulation of her voice had always charmed his ear ; but now it hung more than ever enraptured on the accents, to which a soft, heart-speaking melancholy, lent a new and resistless charm ; while the gentle, half-permitted sigh, gave a tremor to her articulation, and slightly agitated the folded gauze, that veiled, but could not conceal, her lovely form. Yielding to the fierce tide of boundless love, had the Earl not been surrounded by witnesses, he would at that moment have fallen at the feet of Julia, and have thought himself blessed by being allowed to sacrifice at her shrine all his prejudices and licentious schemes.

But he was obliged to resist his feelings ; and soon the distracting recollection darted into his mind, that it was to the image of Selwyn, and her artless tenderness towards this detested rival, that Julia owed that melting, subduing expression of sorrow, which increased and

exalted every charm. Stung by jealousy, goaded by fears of his own failure, and his cousin's ultimate success, and hurried on by a passion whose ardour increased every moment, and bore down before it every opposing suggestion from pride, habits long indulged, and narrow prejudices, he no sooner found himself alone with Lord Montrevor, than, with all the agitation and precipitancy of a man who takes a desperate leap, he confided his love to him, earnestly soliciting his lordship's good offices in disposing Miss Lawrence in his favour.

Lord Montrevor was unfeignedly surprised at this disclosure, and could not refrain from asking the Earl if he had maturely considered the importance of the step he meditated; and, the latter assuring him he had reflected long and seriously, and found that life would have no enjoyment for him unless he could obtain the woman he loved, Lord

Montrevor promised his best assistance, and hastened to impart the news to his wife.

Lady Montrevor was agreeably surprised at the Earl's sudden decision; but, aware that the business might at this time require some degree of management, she took an opportunity of requesting him to allow her to be the first to communicate his proposal to Julia. To this Lord Ashmore readily consented, perceiving her ladyship disposed to favour his suit. But, though he refrained from any pointed declaration, yet the expression of his admiration and tenderness was so evident in his manner towards Julia, that it both confused and distressed her, and contributed to deprive her of her usual spirits, which would formerly have enabled her to check or disregard all advances, that touched not, or were not approved by her heart. Her only resource now was a haughty reserve and persevering silence, till, unable to bear her cold, almost con-

temptuous indifference, Lord Ashmore suddenly took his leave, trusting that Lady Montrevor would prepare the way for his receiving a more gratifying reception the next morning, when he was invited to present himself in Grosvenor Street.



## CHAPTER XVII.

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“ Can it be?

Can I—ah no !—at once give to another

My violated heart ?”

SIGISMUNDA.

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THE maternal anxiety which Lady Montrevor felt for the welfare and happiness of the orphan she had watched, trained and loved from so early an age, was little less than what her own daughter had excited, and prompted her when the Earl quitted the drawing-room, to follow and request a few minutes' conversation with him. Having ascertained the serious nature of his lordship's proposals, and received incontestible proofs of the warmth and sincerity of his attachment to her ward, she proceeded with all the dignity and firmness of virtue, by no means diminished by the elegant refinement and

delicacy of her manner and expressions, to assure him that, brilliant as were his offers, far exceeding indeed all the hopes Miss Lawrence's friends could have ventured to form for her, nothing should induce her to sanction the views of any man, whose conduct and virtuous principles did not prevent a fair prospect of her permanent happiness.

She then politely, but firmly, observed, that the world had not unfrequently associated with his lordship's character reports by no means conformable to that honour and probity which could alone justify her approbation of his wishes respecting the young woman, for whom she was so much interested.

Lord Ashmore received this mild, but well-directed reproof, and the examination of his future intentions that followed, with such an appearance of self-conviction, and avowal of his former indiscretion, and such bold assertions of the entire reformation the lovely Julia had already

wrought in his ideas and resolutions, that his amiable censurer, ever more ready, when two sides offered, to lean to that which presented human nature in the most advantageous light, felt disposed to credit the favourable account he gave of himself.

Lord Ashmore easily saw the advantage he had gained, and, exerting all the power he was conscious he possessed of persuasive eloquence, aided by a naturally most specious address, and winning manners ; with occasional artful and delicate insinuations of deference, and respect towards Lady Montrevor, he at length succeeded in making her completely his friend.

Lady Montrevor's ingenuous nature yielded on this occasion to a conviction that she wished to encourage, and justified, she thought, by Lord Ashmore's well-dissembled penitence, and solemn assurances of reformation. The latter could indeed have told her, that no vir-

tuous motives arrested the course of his licentious pleasures; but that the possession of Julia presented to him a higher gratification; suspended, without radically correcting, his long-continued profligate habits, and reconciled him, at least for a time, to the immoral compromise.

He then obtained a promise that Lady Montrevor would so far exert her influence over Julia, as to represent the union proposed to her in the advantageous points of view in which she confessed it appeared to her. Lady Montrevor did not think herself warranted during this conversation, and before she had spoken to Julia, in mentioning even the name of Selwyn; particularly as she could not believe that she would suffer the slight inclination she entertained for him, unsupported as it was by any decided proofs of preference on his part, to induce her to reject the positive offer of the Earl of Ashmore; towards whom, in spite of the

late pettish dislike she had expressed for him, her ladyship had always observed a good-humoured familiarity, which had declared him in general a much greater favourite than Selwyn had ever appeared to be.

The Earl had also abstained from naming his cousin ; flattering himself that the step he had just taken was of such paramount force and decision, that all minor considerations, not only in the minds of her friends, but also in Julia, would be even more easily overcome, than the late pious scruples of his fair examiner.

He quitted then Lady Montrevor, highly elevated with the promised delight of possessing the lovely Julia ; who seemed to be still more endeared to him by the high price, at which he was to obtain her ; and also by the triumph he should gain over Selwyn, whom he felt he could never forgive for having awakened feelings in the heart of the only woman, in

whom he (Lord Ashmore) had ever wished, yet failed, to excite them.

On leaving Grosvenor Street, the Earl immediately repaired to Lucas's lodgings, and informed him to what lengths his uncontrollable love for Julia had hurried him. His friend was thunderstruck at this unwelcome intelligence ; rightly conjecturing that, married to a lovely, virtuous woman, her influence over him would probably soon supersede that which he had so long and so profitably exercised.

The sarcastic reproaches which he did not spare, very much galled Lord Ashmore ; who, since he had lost sight of our heroine, was more than ever aware of the extent of the sacrifice he was about to make to love.

Lucas, however, addressed his patron on the present occasion with inadequate, though once successful, weapons. Over the faint scruples of honor and conscience, ridicule, aided by a depraved imagination, had often prevailed. But, now the ob-

ject of it was differently circumstanced, and the force of this powerful instrument was materially lessened. There, it met with a willing victim in the weak reluctance of lingering virtue ; here, it was opposed by the violence of passion : and it was well known, that no surmountable obstacles ever overpowered the impetuous desires of Lord Ashmore.

He could not retract ; nor, when he recalled to his imagination all the seducing charms in which he had lately seen Julia arrayed, and questioned his heart, did he wish to do so. Leaving, therefore, his friend to console himself with the thought that they were not yet married, his lordship returned home, and spent the chief part of the night in visions of future happiness ; in the gratifying thought of Selwyn's envious regrets, and in occasional, but lightly passing fears, that it was possible Julia might reject his love.

The young creature, who excited all these emotions, was, in the mean time,

nearly as far removed from peace as her undeserving lover. Indeed, the days of joyous innocence, which with her had almost promised to have no end, seemed to have fled ; or were at best so suddenly overclouded, that scarcely a small speck of celestial blue remained, from whence a faint gleam of hope might dart its kindly ray. Innocence and a guileless heart were, however, still the inmates of that bosom ; where, though sorrow, contending duties, and a weak tenderness had intruded, there yet existed a self-invigorating charm, an internal power, which often revived her sinking spirits, suppressed the rising sigh, and dried the tear ere it had reached her cheek. Let Selwyn slight, condemn, and abandon her ; let the disapprobation of her friends fall upon her conduct ; let even her beloved Frederick accuse her of obstinacy and weakness ; still, while every voluntary movement of her own heart would bear the test of inward scrutiny and self-



examination ; conscious virtue would support her, and the pride of meaning well guard her from despair. This was certainly the language of independence, as well as of innocence ; but it was accompanied with pains and struggles which could not be appeased, and indicated every thing but a state of tranquillity.

Shortly after the Earl's departure, Lady Montrevor had communicated his offer to the astonished Julia ; who, when no longer permitted to doubt the truth of so singular a proceeding, hastily and peremptorily declared she would never accept him.

“ Surely, Julia, you will not without reflecting ——”

“ My dear madam,” she exclaimed, interrupting her, “ not a moment's reflection is necessary. The Earl of Ashmore can never be any thing to me—our characters do not suit—he is much too gay for me—he has no solidity in his judg-

ment—nor steadiness in his principles—nor dignity in his manners—his preference is scarcely any compliment—for he seems always equally desirous of pleasing every one. You have yourself often said, you feared his moral character was not good; and neither your ladyship nor Mr. Byng-ham liked Edward's being very intimate with him, and indeed to me he is very disagreeable."

Lady Montrevor had been nearly provoked to smile, as, in the above list of negatives, with which Julia so unmercifully loaded the character of the Earl, she traced the positive excellencies of that of Selwyn, which her ladyship had often herself pointed out in her family. She now answered,—

"And pray, my love, may I ask how long Lord Ashmore has been so very, very disagreeable to you? for you must excuse my recollecting that, when Lord Carlmaine, he appeared, by your behaviour to him, particularly the contrary."

Julia, vexed and confused, could only request Lady Montrevor would have the goodness to thank the Earl for the honor he did her, and decline the offer.

“But what reason should I give for your rejecting him?” asked her ladyship.

“Tell him,” said she, “I —— I am much obliged to him,—that I am too young,—that I do not wish to marry. And indeed,—indeed,—my dear madam, I do not ;” she added, bursting into tears, and hiding her face on Lady Montrevor’s shoulder.

“Be calm, my dear girl,” said her friend, taking her hand, and sitting down close by her ; “while you are thus agitated, you are wholly incapable of forming a rational judgment on the subject in question. All I ask of you at present is to listen in silence and attention to what age, knowledge of the world, and the most affectionate regard for your welfare, suggest to me to lay before your youth and inexperience. Do not con-

clude, my love, from this prelude that I entertain the slightest wish to lead you to a decision, which should require the sacrifice of a serious, prior, well-placed, attachment. I am, I hope, still farther removed from the possibility of desiring you should unite your fate with a man, whose want of religion and moral rectitude might not only endanger your happiness, but your virtue also. Too well I know, the anguish, the wretchedness, the severity, and peril, of the trial, ever voluntarily to see any woman, and surely not one I love so tenderly, exposed to it. But, before I proceed further, I will tell you, that I had this evening a long conversation with Lord Ashmore ; in which he spoke with so just a sense of regret, nay remorse, of the errors and faults of his youth, that he has given me a very favourable opinion of the natural goodness of his heart : and this sentiment is confirmed by the prudent and honourable arrangements he imparted to me, as

being already made for his future mode of life ; and, above all, his determination to break off immediately all connexion with the unprincipled companions, particularly Captain Lucas, whom the late Earl so greatly disapproved : I must therefore think, that I should be both uncharitable and unjust not to form sanguine hopes of his future conduct. With respect to the very uncommon advantages of this alliance, in a worldly point of view, as they relate to yourself, I will say nothing ; since they are too evident not at the first moment to strike you : but perhaps you have not considered them as affecting your brother. How happy, my Julia, would you feel in possessing the power of giving Frederick such a friend as the Earl of Ashmore ; by whose powerful interest the labours of his profession would be lightened, and his success ensured."

"Oh ! my dear madam," cried Julia, her eyes swimming in tears ; "you know

there is nothing I would not do to serve my brother ; my only —— my dear relation. If you can assure me that, through me, Frederick would rise to the eminence his virtues deserve,—that he would be benefited,—be rendered more happy, by the sacrifice of my peace,—my happiness : name but the means, and you will not find me hesitate. Must I even become the wife of Lord Ashmore, I am ready.”

“ Let not, my sweet girl,” said Lady Montrevor, much affected, and embracing her, “ even your best feelings mislead you thus. I should wholly disapprove a step of this kind ; and, whatever personal advantage your brother could possibly reap from it, he would detest such a sacrifice as your warm romantic imagination has painted. But let me fully understand you, Julia : I see you are averse to the addresses of Lord Ashmore, and I suspect Selwyn to be the sole cause. Is it then possible, that,

notwithstanding what appears to me, to my brother, and all your friends, his indifference, or at best, his great indecision ; notwithstanding, also, the assurance you gave me, that he had never even once expressed his love for you, or given you reason to think he entertained a wish to marry you ; and is now gone abroad without even an attempt to see you since the 'masquerade?—Am I not correct?”—

“ Perfectly so, madam ;” answered Julia, with a sense of rising shame, mingled with pride, not towards Lady Montrevor, but Selwyn.

“ Is it then possible,” her ladyship continued, “ that, on such slight foundations, and under such circumstances, you can cherish an affection sufficiently strong to induce you to reject an opportunity of establishing yourself so advantageously, and, I must hope, so happily in life ?”

“ Oh ! no,” said Julia, deeply colouring, “ do not believe it. If I ever thought

too well, perhaps too tenderly, of Mr. Selwyn, the time is gone by; and I now certainly do not think he deserves either my love or good opinion."

"Nay, Julia," said her ladyship, "though I would not see you weakly partial, neither would I have you unjust. Adolphus Selwyn has many virtues; though he may want decision and constancy in one solitary instance. But tell me, my love, have you no other reason for wishing to refuse Lord Ashmore than what relates to Selwyn?"

"That objection, I assure your ladyship, no longer exists," replied Julia, with momentary indignant pride: "but I never in my life thought of Lord Ashmore as any thing but a common acquaintance; and I do not think I ever could like him sufficiently to persuade myself I was justified in marrying him."

Lady Montrevor had watched all the varying emotions of Julia's heart on her ingenuous intelligent countenance; and



perceived, that, in her present state of mind, while her tenderness towards Selwyn was drowned by less pleasing emotions, she might easily be brought to yield her consent to receive Lord Ashmore, particularly by again urging the probable benefit her brother would derive from such a connexion. But, though she saw all, probably more than all the advantages in the offered alliance to both her young friends, and though she was most anxious to remove from the heart of Julia a growing attachment to Selwyn, of the reciprocity of which she could collect no proofs, and was much inclined to doubt; yet she was far from wishing to take advantage of the sensibility she had excited.

After, therefore, a few more observations on the inconsistent behaviour and apparent indifference of Selwyn, and justly merited encomiums on the person, manners, gentlemanly accomplishments, and, above all, the strong attachment of

the Earl, Lady Montrevor parted from her now silent *protégée* with these words. "I will not longer detain you from your room, my love, nor will I receive any answer to-night. You will, of course, consider all we have both said: I shall do the same; and I have no doubt that, in the morning, I shall have the pleasure to find that your natural good sense has convinced you of the indiscretion (I had almost said indelicacy) of a young woman's cherishing a secret affection for a man, by whom it was not sought,—when your virtue and strength of mind will speedily enable you to overcome it. You will also feel assured that affection alone dictates now, as it always has done, and ever will do, my advice; which, on this occasion, is, that you consent to admit the addresses of Lord Ashmore, unless you have stronger reasons for rejecting them than I am now acquainted with."

For the first time in her life, Julia

received the affectionate services of Ursula almost in silence ; and was suffering her to leave the room without embracing her, when her old nurse, bursting into tears, asked if she had given her any cause of offence. The afflicted girl threw her arms round her neck, and, mingling her tears with those of her early friend, said, “No, dear Ursula, you can never offend me ; but I am rather out of spirits : to-morrow I shall be better, and then I will tell you all.” Ursula returned her caresses, and quitted her ; grieved at heart, as she said, to see her dear sweet face so pale, and her eyes so red.

Julia would gladly have unbosomed herself to this old and faithful favourite ; but she knew, that, from the moment Ursula supposed it possible she should become a countess, and the mistress of Brookdale, every other consideration would have lost its weight, and every opposing circumstance have called forth

her unqualified disapprobation. She was not therefore the confidant that, at this time, suited the state of Julia's mind; which, now that she was no longer under the influence of Lady Montrevor, shrunk more than ever repugnant from an union with Lord Ashmore. Not but that, when she dispassionately permitted herself to think of him, she allowed him all the favourable qualifications her ladyship had enumerated; and, had her heart been free to choose, she could not imagine to herself any reason why she should not have felt grateful for his love, and perhaps have shared it; if, after proper investigation, his character had proved deserving the good opinion with which he had so suddenly impressed Lady Montrevor.

But, alas! that heart, perhaps indiscreetly, certainly unfortunately, had made its election. She had lately seen too much of Selwyn. In the short but delightful hours past with him at the

parsonage, his character, till then, unmarked by her but for stern probity and cynical observation, had rapidly unfolded itself; and, beneath a reserved and rather rigid exterior, she thought she had discovered a heart of delicate, almost enthusiastic, sensibility; strong in every religious principle and moral virtue, warm and steady in friendship, and capable of the most devoted attachment. But if, indeed, he were thus susceptible, *she* was not fated to awaken his tenderness; or, if she had excited a short-lived preference, the sickly sentiment had soon subsided, and he thought of her no more. Still her heart could never cease to admire, respect, and love, what she then saw of his manly, noble disposition; the mild and pleasing sweetness of his manners, and the total absence of all selfish consideration, that marked his every word and action.

We do not mean to accuse our heroine of a want of discernment, although we

suspect that her penetration did not lead to this sudden discovery of Selwyn's merit. He had, indeed, a far more successful advocate in the partial heart of Julia, than he could expect to have found in the most unprejudiced conclusions of her judgment and observation. Yet the reasons of her preference were so solid and manifest, that her choice could not be said to be directed by the delusions of her imagination, although this creative faculty had not been inactive.

To the powers of Selwyn's mind there was moreover attached a mysterious influence, which, with the very few he had ever permitted himself to call female friends, was generally irresistible, and in its effects was also much more extensive ; for it reached to other occasions, in which passion and partiality could not be supposed to mislead. Selwyn certainly possessed an acknowledged superiority : he might be said to be endowed with an unusual strength of mind, the force of which

was not lessened by the dissipation and refined habits of polished society : to this rare quality, wherever his character unfolded itself, may be ascribed that natural ascendancy, which he was seen to possess, almost without an effort, over the minds of others.

Such, so richly endowed by heaven, nature, and love, did Selwyn now appear to Julia, when placed by her imagination by the side of Lord Ashmore. No wonder, then, if the latter, though attended by the seducing attractions of exalted rank, Lady Montrevor's support, and a heart to all appearance devoted to her, was disqualified to contend with so formidable a rival. No : Julia thought she might not, nay, most probably, never should, see Selwyn again, till he had formed some other connexion, promising more certain happiness than what she still could not but believe he had once contemplated with her ; and with all the energy and sincerity of her heart she

wished he might find it : but, for herself, she felt persuaded, she had thought of him too long, and too tenderly, ever to experience sentiments sufficiently favourable towards any other man, to induce her to accept his hand without feeling criminal. No: her heart she felt was unalienably Selwyn's; and never would she give another a right to claim its tenderness as a duty. Such being her feelings, she would submit them the next day to Lady Montrevor; convinced that she would never urge her to act contrary to her conscientious belief of what was right. To Frederick's advantage she was sensibly alive; but, could he view the state of her mind, would he not approve her rejection of Lord Ashmore, since her heart would not go with her hand? Would he not also with generous scorn reject every good to be purchased by a pang of hers?

Amidst all the reflections of this sleepless night, some there were, however,



that shed a gentle ray of hope over the darkened prospects of our heroine ; whose youth, ignorance of the consequence of worldly advantage, innate loftiness of spirit, and naturally contented mind, combined to render her insensible to, or regardless of, the brilliant attractions of the alliance within her reach. Lord Ashmore was probably not informed of the suspicious mystery which clouded her parentage ; and, Julia's pride yielding to her fears of being distressed by the solicitations of her friends to accept Lord Ashmore, she determined positively to insist on this communication being made to him ; hoping that his lordship would be induced to withdraw his addresses, and thus spare her a painful opposition to the wishes, which she began to fear would be those of nearly all her friends.

There was also another, but more latent, source, in which hope so secretly dipped his wing, that Julia was herself

at first scarcely conscious of its effect on her feelings ; but by degrees its influence was acknowledged by her heart, gave energy to her resolution, and the sweet, though faint, delusion shed a glimmering of pleasure over her reflection. She could not be mistaken ; the tremulous voice, the confused, yet pointed words he had uttered, the impetuosity of his manner when last she saw Selwyn, had, she thought, all evidently declared him tormented by jealousy. And, if she was right in this conclusion, what might she not hope when he should know she had positively rejected Lord Ashmore's offered hand ?

In these too flattering sensations she however would not permit herself long to indulge, recollecting Lady Montrevor's declaration of the indelicacy of them towards a man, who, so far from seeking, had wholly withdrawn himself from her. Still, in spite of the wounded pride she incessantly summoned to aid her in sub-

duing these sentiments, they kept possession of her heart ; and had, at least, an equal share with her sense of propriety towards the earl, in directing her determination to refuse him.

She arose early, and sought the solace of the only friend, whose age, she thought, might excite feelings similar to her own. She had found it impossible to conceal from this loved companion (as she had at first intended, on account of Edward's great intimacy with Lord Ashmore) any of the late occurrences, contenting herself with insisting, that Caroline should not communicate them to her cousin. From Miss Montrevor she now met with kindred sympathy ; for, though no romance or impetuosity of feeling had ever entered into the composition of her character, yet so near being united to the man whom she had loved from her infancy, she was well capable of feeling Julia's situation.

Miss Montrevor, therefore, now en-

couraged her friend in declining Lord Ashmore ; but, at the same time, impressed with her mother's opinions and belief respecting Selwyn, she urged her with affectionate earnestness, and for the sake of her own peace, to think no more of one, who had shewn himself much more the slave of suspicion and inconsistency, than of any serious preference for her.

Stung by observations, which she had no power of refuting, Julia again felt all her pride and resentment against Selwyn revive ; and, though it could not operate in altering her determination respecting Lord Ashmore, it yet enabled her to meet Lady Montrevor with more composure and fortitude than the latter had expected. Julia immediately submitted to her ladyship the propriety of making Lord Ashmore acquainted with the circumstances respecting her mother, unless she were permitted at once to decline the honour he intended her. Her

ladyship answered, that Lord Montrevor understood, that by some means the Earl seemed fully acquainted with those particulars, and considered them as wholly unimportant, compared with the happiness of calling her his wife. "But," continued her ladyship, pointing to a letter in her hand, "this comes most opportunely to relieve my mind, and assist our determinations. My brother arrived in town last night, and I expect him every moment." She had scarcely finished these words, when Mr. Byngham entered. As soon as the mutual expressions of pleasure at his return had been exchanged, Julia quitted the room, when Lady Montrevor, without loss of time, imparted to her brother all that had related to Julia, Lord Ashmore, and Selwyn.

Mr. Byngham was at first most agreeably surprised at the very important conquest made by the charms of his lovely ward; while he regretted that Selwyn

had not been equally captivated. Suspicious apprehensions afterwards arose of the stability and sincerity of the Earl's reformation, and, consequently, of Julia's happiness. Still the establishment was in itself so desirable in every point of view, as to interest and consideration, that he ended with expressing a wish to see Julia Countess of Ashmore ; though he affectionately added, that nothing should induce him to use his influence in persuading her to put any violent restraint upon her inclinations.

As a very few hours would bring the Earl to receive an answer to his proposals, Julia was immediately summoned, and again her heart and sentiments underwent a most painful and severe examination, during which Lady Montrevor's opinion respecting Selwyn was fully confirmed by Mr. Byngham, who saw, with great concern, that his excellent young friend, unconscious of half the mischief he had done, and himself pro-

bably but slightly impressed by Julia's attractions, had most seriously injured the peace of the artless girl. Young, however, as she was, and though now visibly depressed, gifted by nature with so much spirit and vivacity of temper, and, above all, having, when pressed, candidly acknowledged that, till the masquerade, she had always rather liked than disliked Lord Ashmore, Mr. Byngham imagined they might safely look forward to her getting the better of this juvenile inclination, and becoming sensible of the sacrifices made by Lord Ashmore to obtain her; and, by degrees, returning his love.

After drawing Lady Montrevor aside, and communicating to her these reflections, in which she fully coincided, he thus kindly addressed the agitated girl. "My dear Julia, this business, though of the greatest importance, need neither distress nor alarm you. Lord and Lady Montrevor, and I, see this opportunity of

settling you so advantageously in life, as a most fortunate occurrence ; but, however desirable it may appear to us, and we have no doubt must do to your brother, yet, without his personal consent and sanction, I do not consider we should be justified in urging you to dispose of your hand."

"Oh, no, my dear sir," said Julia, her eyes recovering at the instant their wonted brilliant animation, "let nothing be said or done till Frederick's return ; then it will be quite soon enough to give an answer to Lord Ashmore."

"Not quite so, my dear," said Lady Montrevor ; "his lordship must receive an answer to-day, and your guardian will give it him."

"Yes," said Mr. Byngham, "I will see the Earl of Ashmore, and, without committing or absolutely engaging you, I will endeavour to persuade him to wait a month before he receives your final answer. In two days, I am informed, he



must embark for Ireland ; but, under the present circumstances, you must be aware that he will expect, and most reasonably too, that you should allow him to see you."

Julia answered,—while her heart beat high with joy at her present reprieve, and the anticipation of ultimately escaping, by Frederick's means, from the persecution of her friends, which, however affectionately exercised, was not less distressing, and to be feared,—“Certainly, my dear sir, whatever you and Lady Montrevor think is due from me to Lord Ashmore I shall submit to, provided I do not thereby pledge myself to accept him.”

“Mr. Byngham will prevent his so interpreting your complaisance, till his wishes are sanctioned by your brother ;” replied Lady Montrevor : and, the conference breaking up, Julia joined Caroline with a countenance radiant with one of her happiest smiles. If Frederick was to be the arbitrator of her

fate, such was her confidence in the tenderness of his affection for her, and the influence she had ever possessed over him, that she felt convinced that she had nothing to fear ; as he would, better than all the world, understand and respect her feelings, consult her wishes, and indulge her weakness.

Thus re-assured, with all the celerity that marks sanguine youth, the hue of health, and almost joy, revisited her cheek ; and, though a sudden paleness again overspread it, when the loud knock announced the arrival of the Earl, fear reached not her heart ; and, confiding in the promise of Mr. Byngham, the notice she received some time after, that his lordship waited for her in the dining-room, though it made her tremble in every limb, yet it could not prevent her from feeling sensible, that a heavy weight was removed from her mind.

In vain she requested her guardian to return with her to Lord Ashmore, or

Lady Montrevor to go with her, or even Caroline to accompany her. It was agreed that, after the liberal and handsome manner in which his lordship had behaved, and submitted to all the conditions proposed by Mr. Byngham, it would be equally improper and ungenerous to refuse him an opportunity of conversing with her alone, and of pleading his own cause. Mr. Byngham and Lady Montrevor then affectionately, but with much seriousness, reminded her that, if Lord Ashmore could not be accepted till her brother's opinion was known, neither must she consider herself at liberty to refuse him.

“I could not deny his lordship the freedom of declaring to you his sentiments without witnesses, Julia,” said Mr. Byngham; “but I warned him not to expect any decision from you: but, on the other hand, I fully expect that you do not, at least for the present, in any way

offend or discourage a man, who has shewn almost an excess of disinterested affection for you.”—Saying this, he led her to the door of the apartment, where Lord Ashmore was waiting in great impatience. Julia, though much agitated, was not aware of all the difficulty of the singular situation in which she was placed, and from which Mr. Byngam augured much in favour of what he now decidedly wished.

Indeed, in his late interview with Lord Ashmore, the latter, whose passion for Julia rose higher on learning the temporary opposition (for in no other light could he possibly consider this appeal to Frederick Lawrence,) to the immediate success he had anticipated, displayed so much ardour and sincerity of attachment, blended with such honorable feeling, that this worthy man became, equally with his sister, the dupe of his hypocritical professions; and he felt assured, that the

heart of one so young as Julia, unless guarded by a prior engagement, would never be able to resist such generous, passionate solicitation, as she would now be exposed to.

While he returned to impart to his sister these sentiments and hopes, Julia had several times applied her hand to the lock of the door, without having courage to open it; and perhaps might at last have retreated, had not the impatience of the Earl led him suddenly to throw open the door, when, seeing the blushing, hesitating girl, joy dispersed the cloud gathering on his brow; and, seizing her trembling hand, he drew her eagerly, but respectfully in, and, closing the door, led her to a seat: then, standing before her for a few moments, enjoyed the full tide of luxury afforded by the contemplation of her glowing, beauteous features. Her eyes remained bent towards the ground; but still, shaded as they were, he could perceive that they had lost the

expression of sorrow with which he had lately seen them filled; her face also no longer wore the sad expression which, the last time he saw her, he thought had so well become her. But now that love and vanity whispered that he had wrought this change, she appeared to his enraptured mind a thousand times more lovely. At length, placing himself by her side, he said,—“May I flatter myself that this compliance with my wish to see you is less in obedience to your friends than the desire of quieting my fears and uneasiness.” Julia remaining silent, he continued,—“You have doubtless been told that the first most anxious wish of my heart is to obtain your approbation of my love; but no one, Julia, could tell you half the ardor of those wishes. I am informed you will not,—cannot,—yet give a decided answer: but, though it may be settled that you should not absolutely promise to be mine, yet say that from you no obstacle

shall arise to damp the hope, that time shall bless our union. Give me but this assurance, and I swear," continued he, with increased earnestness, and pressing forcibly both her hands to his lips, "to live for you alone, to make your happiness, your wishes, your will, my law. Your relations, your friends, shall be mine ; and so shall all your pursuits ; and in time, I trust, your virtues also. Speak, dearest Julia,—permit me to hope,—at this moment I ask no more."

He paused ; and, allowing her at length to withdraw her hands, she availed herself of their regained liberty to cover her face, which she had before averted from his earnest gaze.

Mr. Byngham had been perfectly right in his conclusions ; no young female, whose heart was still her own, could have refused it to the youthful, handsome, importunate lover, who now pleaded so vehemently for a return of love as honourable as fervent.

Nor did even Julia behold or hear him unmoved ; but her emotion, could he have penetrated the whole of its cause, would not have highly flattered her admirer. There was in his voice, at times, a peculiarity similar to that of Selwyn, particularly in its softest tones : a circumstance which on this occasion greatly affected her, and perhaps made her listen with more indulgence and patience than she probably otherwise would have done ; yet it also served forcibly to recall the image of Adolphus to her imagination, as an effectual talisman against the pleading of the supplicating Ashmore, who, emboldened by a silence which Julia knew not how to break, continued to press his suit with more warmth and tenderness, as his hopes of success increased.

Our heroine's nature, however deficient and imperfect in other respects, possessed not a grain of coquetry, or that mean female vanity which glories in the pain it inflicts. Far, therefore, from



deriving any gratification from the passionate effusions of love, uttered by a young man so formed to inspire a corresponding sentiment, she was sincerely grieved at her conquest, while she almost reproached herself for weakly adhering to the cold, ungrateful, absent Selwyn ; and refusing to share the generous affection of his cousin, whom the whole world would pronounce far more attractive.

With these favourable dispositions towards her lover, it will not appear surprising, if,—inexperienced as she was in these matters, and yielding to the characteristic generous sensibility of her disposition, fettered too as she was by the restrictions of her friends,—her answers and behaviour to Lord Ashmore were not sufficiently discouraging to induce him in the least to despair. “I shall ever retain, my lord,” she said, with more than her usual sweetness, “a most lively

remembrance of the honour you do me, and the generous attachment you profess. *More* it is not in my power, and *less* gratitude will not permit me to say."

Lord Ashmore resorted to every little artifice for prolonging the interview, which Julia at length resolutely terminated, secretly promising herself never again to be exposed alone to a repetition of a subject to which she had been compelled to listen.

The Earl took his leave, more than ever devoted to the lovely woman whose mild fascinating manner, and irresistible sensibility, had now first taught him, that in woman were higher and more powerful charms than those given to the beauteous face, or finest form; and he resolved, that the two days he still had to spend in England should, as much as possible, be devoted to Julia, hoping he should be able to make farther advances in the flowery path before him. But

these hopes were in some degree baffled. No entreaties on his part, no persuasions of her friends, could obtain for him one moment's private interview with Julia, who had already reproached herself for her former compliance, which, she now saw reason to fear, had led his lordship to form conclusions to which she would never agree.

He was however going to Ireland, and that one fortunate circumstance so much relieved the mind of Julia, as to make her forget that, although Lord Ashmore's departure might release her from the vexatious importunity of his solicitations, yet that her more serious causes of grief and uneasiness would still remain.

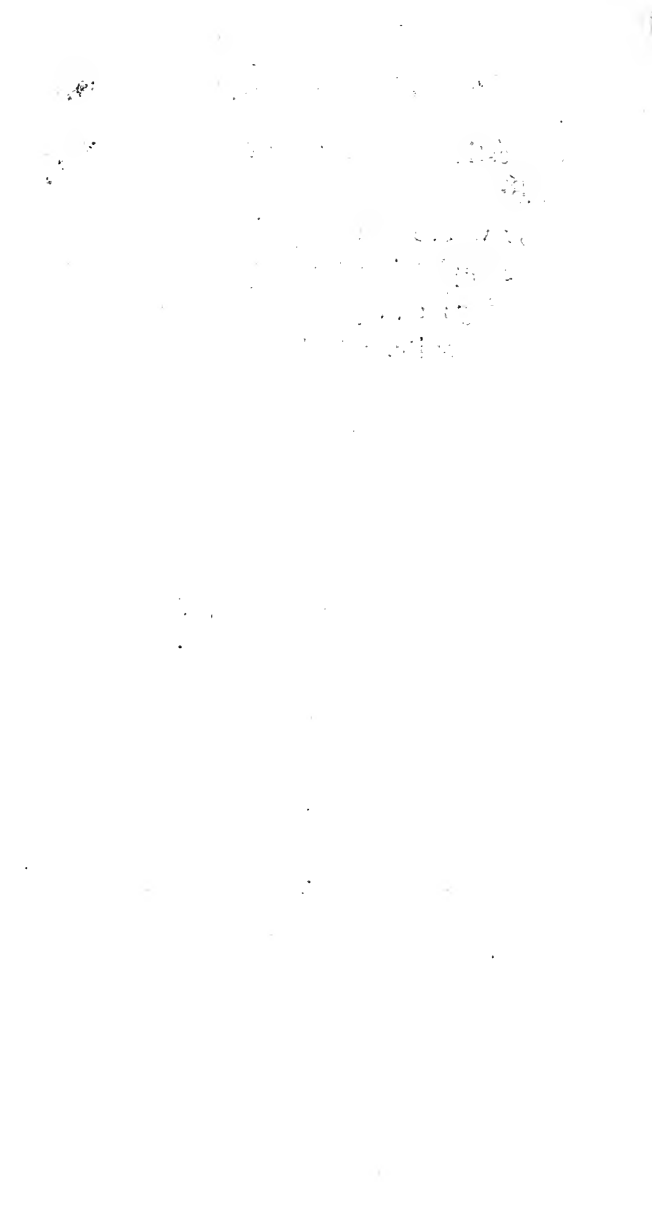
In the expectation of this near liberation, and the prospect of soon returning to Arlingham, where it would not be long before her beloved Frederick would join her, and take nearly all her cares upon himself, Julia found courage to suppress

her feelings, and submit to treat Lord Ashmore so as not to incur the displeasure of Mr. Byngham and Lady Montrevor, both of whom, she plainly perceived, were anxious for her union with his lordship, though they professed to leave the result to be settled by the decision of Frederick and her own heart. Caroline was also now, by the description of the warmth and generosity of the Earl's attachment, become an advocate for him; while Ursula declared, she only wished to live to see her settled at Brookdale, and she should absolutely die if Lord Ashmore was rejected.

At last the parting was over: the Earl had protested that his happiness, his life, depended on his union with Julia, and had sailed for Ireland. On the following day, Lord Montrevor, perfectly recovered, and now happy in the renewal of the tranquil pleasures and enjoyments nowhere so permanent and unfading as in

a domestic circle, set out with his family, Mr. Byngham, and Edward, for Devonshire, where he hoped to lose still more completely all remembrance of the many days and years he had spent in guilty pursuits, which he had so blindly and so fatally sought as pleasures.

END OF VOL. II.











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